

King Solomon: His Birth and Names in the Second Temple Period Literature *

As is well known, David and Solomon have an essential place in the Former Prophets, namely in the books of Samuel and Kings. In contrast to David who is mentioned in several writings included in the Latter Prophets ¹, Solomon is not mentioned in any place there. However, he is mentioned in a number of books which are included in the Writings. This comprises, first and foremost, the late historical books — Chronicles (several times in 1 Chronicles and particularly 2 Chronicles 1-9 // 1 Kings 1-11) and Nehemiah (13,26) —, and in the poetic and wisdom literature, specifically: Psalms (72,1; 127,1), the Song of Songs (1,1.5; 3,7-11; 8,11-12) and Proverbs (1,1; 25,1).

The purpose of this article is not to discuss the role of Solomon in the entire Writings and the Second Temple period Jewish literature. Rather, its goal is limited to discussing Solomon's primary presentation (his birth, name and his place among Bathsheba's sons) in Chronicles, while critically reviewing the current opinions on this issue in biblical scholarship. It examines the name "Yedidyah (Jedidiah)" which is not mentioned in Chronicles or in Josephus' writings, but is alluded to in Psalms and Nehemiah. The article also explores the word-plays on the names Shelomoh and Yedidyah in the book of Ben Sira. In addition, on the subject of Solomon's names, the article discusses the question of whether "Qoheleth" (Qoh 1,1) was indeed the third name of Solomon.

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¹ See, for example, Isa 9,6; 16,5; 29,1; Jer 17,25; 22,2.30; 36,30; Ezek 34,24; 37,24; Amos 9,11; Hos 3,5; Zech 12,7.8; 13,1.

I. Solomon's Birth and His Place among Bathsheba's Sons in Chronicles

In the so-called Chronistic history (composed in the Persian period; ca. 400-375 B.C.E.)², the Chronicler recounts the story about the Israelites' wars with the Transjordanian kingdoms – the Ammonites and Arameans, essentially as it appears in his source, the Book of Samuel (1 Chr 19,1–20,3 // 2 Sam 10,1-19 + 11,1a-b + 12,26-31)³. However, he omits from his composition the story about David's affair with Uriah's wife and his murder, and David's marriage with Bathsheba which led to the birth of Solomon (2 Sam 11,1c–12,25). All that masterful and sophisticated literarily structured narrative appearing in Samuel⁴ was completely left aside from the potential readers of Chronicles. Furthermore, the Chronicler omits not only the detailed story of 2 Sam 11,1c–12,25 but also any reference to it. When he presents Solomon and his mother, for the first time in his book, he writes: “Bathshua the daughter of Ammiel” (1 Chr 3,5), instead of “Bathsheba the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite”, as is presented in his *Vorlage* (2 Sam 11,3.26)⁵. The intention of the Chronicler is obvious: to “purify”

² For the dating of the Chronistic history, see I. KALIMI, “The Date of the Book of Chronicles: Biblical Text, Elephantine Papyri and El-Ibrahimiya's Aramaic Grave Inscription”, *An Ancient Israelite Historian. Studies in the Chronicler, His Time, Place, and Writing* (SSN 46; Assen 2005) 41-65; ID., “1 and 2 Chronicles”, *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Books of the Bible* (ed. M.D. COOGAN) (Oxford 2011) I, 120-132, esp. 125.

³ In contrast to some scholars (e.g., A.G. Auld), my opinion is that Samuel-Kings were the primary source of the Chronicler. On this issue, see in detail I. KALIMI, “Kings with Privilege: The Core Source(s) of the Parallel Texts between the Deuteronomistic and Chronistic Histories”, *RB* 119 (2012) 498-517.

⁴ See I. KALIMI, “Solomon's Birth Story within Its Biblical-Historical Setting, Literary and Theological Frameworks” (2 Samuel 10–12), forthcoming.

⁵ LXX and Vulgate versions of 1 Chr 3,5 read בַּת־שֶׁבַע. Targum Chronicles explicitly identifies: “Bathshua, who was Bathsheba”. “The variation בַּת־שֶׁבַע / בַּת־שֶׁבַע is because of homophony of the שֶׁבַע and שֶׁבַע; cf. E.L. CURTIS – A.A. MADSEN, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Chronicles* (ICC; Edinburgh 1910) 99. For the form *Bathshua*, cf. 1 Chr 2,3; Gen 38,2.12 (Judah's wife). The name *Ammiel* in Chronicles instead of *Eliam* in Samuel is a result of a different placement of the theophoric element; compare יְהוֹיָכִן/יְהוֹיָדָה, יְהוֹאָחָז/יְהוֹאָחָז. In his commentary on 1 Chr 3,5 David Kimchi states that the names Bathshua/Bathsheba as well as Ammiel/*Eliam* are variations of the same names.

David and Solomon's mother completely from any stain of their adulterous affair and avoid even a hint of it. Moreover, the Chronicler prevents using or even mentioning once the theophoric name "Yedidyah" (i.e., "beloved of the Lord") in his writing. A probable explanation of this fact could be as follows: in 2 Sam 12,24-25 "Yedidyah" is related to the story of the adultery (that is, while the first son died, the second son, Solomon, was loved by the Lord), and therefore the Chronicler does not refer to that name ⁶. Indeed, any hint of that issue would damage the idealized portrayals of the founders of the Davidic Dynasty — David and Solomon — that he presents in his writing ⁷. This intention of the Chronicler is appropriately and persistently noted in pre-modern and modern biblical scholarship. For instance, already in the 12th century, the author of the commentary ascribed to Rashi (Pseudo-Rashi) states in his comment on several verses in the book that "In this book, he (= the Chronicler) does not want to say anything that may hurt the Davidic House (= Dynasty)" ⁸.

Indeed, if the Chronicler wanted to exclude from his book the story of 2 Samuel 12, it would have been complicated for him to include the story regarding the birth and death of David's and Bathsheba's first son (2 Sam 11,27; 12,14-23), for the reason that is just mentioned. Nonetheless, it seems that there is an additional motivation for the Chronicler to exclude this story, a motivation that was completely overlooked in the scholarship. This son was born as a result of adultery, and he died because of the sins of his parents. As such, the story's rationale stands in contradiction to the fundamental theological concept of the Chronicler, namely that

Septuagint 2 Sam 11,3 has: "the daughter of *Eliab*" (interchange of א and ב), and the Peshitta: "the daughter of *Ahinoam*" (1 Chr 3,1). For a detailed discussion on the identity of Bathsheba, see A.E. GARDNER, "The Identity of Bath-Sheba", *RB* 112 (2005) 521-553.

⁶ For an additional reason for ignoring of the name "Yedidyah" in Chronicles, see below, § II, 2.

⁷ Accordingly, the Chronicler omits also the reference to the David and Bathsheba scene that appears in 1 Kgs 15,5; see the parallel texts between 1 Kgs 15,1-6 and 2 Chr 13,1-3.

⁸ The citation is from Pseudo-Rashi's commentary on 1 Chr 17,13. See I. KALIMI, *The Retelling of Chronicles in Jewish Tradition and Literature. A Historical Journey* (Winona Lake, IN 2009) 199-209, esp. 204-205, and there additional references to Pseudo-Rashi's commentary and discussion.

everyone dies for his own sin(s) ⁹. The Chronicler has adopted the justice and retribution principle that is well expressed by the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Jeremiah states: "In those days they shall say no more, the fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge. But everyone shall die for his own iniquity; every man who eats sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge" (Jer 31,28-29; cf. Ezek 18,2). Ezekiel clearly expresses: "The soul that sins, shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him" (Ezek 18,20; see also Deut 24,16; 2 Kgs 14,6 // 2 Chr 25,4) ¹⁰.

As a result of the omission of the text from 2 Sam 11,1c-12,25, though the reader of Chronicles has been informed about Solomon's birth, he is not provided with any information about the circumstances that led to it ¹¹. The presentation of Solomon in the list of David's sons who were born in Jerusalem (1 Chr 3,5-9) leads the reader to believe that Solomon was born under normal circumstances, just as in the cases of the other sons of David and many other individuals mentioned in the genealogical lists which were registered before 3,5-9 and after (1 Chr 1,1-3,4 and 3,10-9,44).

As mentioned above, the Chronicler does not record the birth and death of Bathsheba's first child (2 Sam 11,27; 12,13-23). But he also does not report any details regarding the birth of the second

⁹ Similarly, Solomon's sins caused the division of his kingdom (1 Kgs 11,11-13), which took place not in Solomon's time but after his death and hurt his son, Rehoboam; see also 1 Kgs 15,29-30; 16,12.13.

¹⁰ For this theological concept in Chronicles, see J. WELLHAUSEN, *Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels* (Berlin ²1883) 197-205, = ID., *Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel* (Gloucester, MA 1973) 203-210; R.B. DILLARD, "Reward and Punishment in Chronicles: The Theology of Immediate Retribution", *WTJ* 46 (1984) 164-172. For further bibliography on this issue, see I. KALIMI, *The Books of Chronicles. A Classified Bibliography* (Simor Bible Bibliography 1; Jerusalem 1990) 95-96. Nonetheless, the Chronicler does not systematically imply this method in his book; see for instance, 2 Chronicles 25 and 32; and cf. W. RUDOLPH, *Chronikbücher* (HAT 21; Tübingen ²1955) xix.

¹¹ Thus, the Chronicler also excluded from his book the "Court Story" of Solomon's succession which is recounted in 1 Kings 1-2. See I. KALIMI, "The Rise of Solomon in the Ancient Israelite Historiography", *The Figure of Solomon in Jewish, Christian and Islamic Tradition*. King, Sage and Architect (ed. J. VERHEYDEN) (Themes in Biblical Narrative 16; Leiden 2013) 7-44.

child — Solomon (12,24-25). Instead of these, he gives the list of David's sons as is mentioned in 2 Sam 5,14, and adds to the end of the list: "four by Bathshua daughter of Ammiel" (1 Chr 3,5c) ¹²:

2 Sam 5,14-16	1 Chr 3,5-8
14. These are the names of those who were born to him in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon,	5 a. These were born to him in Jerusalem: b. Shimea, Shobab, Nathan ¹³ , and Solomon c. four by Bathshua, daughter of Ammiel
15. Ibhar, Elishua, . . .	and Ibhar, Elishama, [. . .]

The information regarding the names of the sons of David in 1 Chronicles 3 was taken from 2 Sam 5,14-17. The Chronicler repeats this list verbatim, once again, in 1 Chr 14,4-6, a place that stands in parallel to 2 Sam 5,14-15 ¹⁴. However, although the names "Shimea, Shobab, Nathan, and Solomon" appear in 2 Sam 5,14 and Solomon is mentioned there in the fourth spot among the 11 sons of David, no one would conclude from 1 Chronicles 14 that Bathsheba had four sons. That Bathsheba delivered four sons to David, Solomon being the fourth and youngest one, emerges only from 1 Chr 3,5. This content clearly stands in contrast to what is known about the children Bathsheba bore in 2 Samuel, that she gave birth to two children: the first one died and the second was Solomon — her first, the oldest and the only surviving child. Besides, there is no further information in any early text on the number of children born to Bathsheba. In short, according to the early biblical texts, Bathsheba had one child and not four, and, in any case, Solomon was her first, the only and the oldest son rather than the

¹² These words appear only here and in 1 Chr 14,4-6 (// 2 Sam 5,14-15).

¹³ Jesus' genealogy presented in Luke 3,31 traces him through Nathan rather than through Solomon as in Matthew 1,6-16; see the discussion by KALIMI, *Retelling of Chronicles*, 66 and note 134. Is the "House of Nathan" mentioned in Zach 12,13 related to Nathan mentioned in the texts under review?

¹⁴ This repetition in Chronicles probably stresses Solomon's birth place. That is to say, Solomon was born in a city which became the spiritual and cultural center of the Jewish people in the time of the Chronicler himself; see KALIMI, "The View of Jerusalem in the Ethnographical Introduction of Chronicles", *An Ancient Israelite Historian*, 88.

fourth and the youngest one. Following is a critical survey of several ancient and modern approaches regarding these issues, and finally my own suggestion.

Presumably, in order to avoid these difficulties, the Syriac translator(s) deleted 3,5c. That is to say, instead of dealing with the problems, the translator(s) made them nonexistent. There is no sign in the Talmudic and Midrashic literature of the rabbis' attempt to struggle with these difficulties. Either they were not aware of these contradictions or simply could not explain them. Later on, the Masoretic scribes put *zaqef-qatan* on the word "four" in order to separate the number from "Bathsheba" ¹⁵, as if wishing to say that not all the "four" sons were from Bathsheba.

In medieval times, David Kimchi (1160-1235) attempted to solve the contradictions between Samuel-Kings and Chronicles. In his commentary on 1 Chr 3,5, he suggests that the names of the four sons in verse 5b are not listed according to chronological order of their birth date, but rather the list runs from the youngest son to the eldest – Solomon. But even if Kimchi is correct, his suggestion solves only part of the problem, that is, Solomon was the eldest son of Bathsheba. It does not solve the problem that Samuel counts one surviving son of Bathsheba, while the Chronicler lists four. Moreover, why should one consider that the sons in verse 5b are listed differently from those in 3,1-3 and 15-16 (or in any other place in Chronicles or in the Hebrew Bible), where the names usually follow chronological order?

In modern biblical scholarship, many exegetes fail either to admit the contradictions under review ¹⁶ or to suggest any explanation to solve them. For instance, Sara Japhet admits that "The appearance here of Solomon as Bathsheba's fourth son, while according to all our

¹⁵ Cf. T. WILLI, *Chronik* (BKAT 24/1; Neukirchen-Vluyn 2009) I, 111.

¹⁶ See for example, S. OETTLI, *Die geschichtlichen Hagiographen (Chronika, Esra, Nehemia, Ruth und Esther) und das Buch Daniel* (Kurzgefasster Kommentar zu den heiligen Schriften Alten und Neuen Testaments; Nördlingen 1889) 22; W.E. BARNES, *The Books of Chronicles* (The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges; Cambridge 1899) 16; I. BENZINGER, *Die Bücher der Chronik – erklärt* (Kurzer Hand-Commentar zum Alten Testament 20; Tübingen – Leipzig 1901) 11; CURTIS – MADSEN, *Chronicles*, 99-100; H.G.M. WILLIAMSON, *1 and 2 Chronicles* (The New Century Bible Commentary; Grand Rapids, MI – London 1982) 56; R.L. BRAUN, *1 Chronicles* (WBC 14; Waco, TX 1986) 50, among many others.

sources he was clearly her first, is indeed difficult”¹⁷, but she fails to suggest any answer to this or the other problem (namely, that Bathsheba had only one and not four sons). There are, however, some scholars that attempt to suggest solutions to these issues. For example, Rudolf Kittel simply asserted: “The expansion of the list with 2 [sic!] more names was caused by text corruption”¹⁸. Wilhelm Rudolph considers the entire list of David’s descendants in 1 Chronicles 3 as a late post-Chronistic addition, which is based (in his opinion) on extra-biblical sources¹⁹. Similarly, Rudolf Mosis considers the words “four by Bathshua daughter of Ammiel” (together with entire 3,5-9) as a secondary, late interpolation made by a late redactor of Chronicles according to what he found in 1 Chr 14,4-7²⁰. This approach seems to be an easy answer that creates a series of new problems. Why should the post-Chronistic writer interpolate these words (or chapter) into the text and create the contradictions between Chronicles and Samuel? The Chronicler repeated the list in two places (1 Chr 3,5-9 and 14,4-7) in order to stress the birth place of Solomon (see above). What was the purpose of the late interpolator repeating the list in 1 Chr 3,5-9? Moreover, there is no textual or philological basis to consider verse 5c as a late addition.

Although the Chronicler does not include numbers in 1 Chr 14,4-7, he adds the numbers “four” in 1 Chr 3,5c and “nine” in verse 8 of the same chapter. It is reasonable to consider these numbers as coming from the hand of the Chronicler rather than as “a later gloss made by someone who added the total number of children here and at the end of the verse (‘nine’), as Ralph W. Klein claims²¹. It is sufficient

¹⁷ See S. JAPHET, *I & II Chronicles. A Commentary* (OTL; Louisville, KY 1993) 96.

¹⁸ “Besonders sind über die Vorlage hinaus die 4 ersten als Söhne der Bathseba bezeichnet. *Die Erweiterung der Liste um 2 Namen wird auf Textfehlern ruhen*”. See R. KITTEL, *Die Bücher der Chronik übersetzt und erklärt* (HAT 6,1; Göttingen 1902) 22. In his comment on verse 8, Kittel attempts to explain (in my opinion unsuccessfully) how that textual corruption happened.

¹⁹ See RUDOLPH, *Chronikbücher*, 26. Notice, Rudolph does not include 1 Chronicles 3 within his “Gliederung der Chronikbücher”; see pp. 1-5 esp. 1. On the possibility that the Chronicler had an extra-biblical source, see below in this study.

²⁰ See R. MOSIS, *Untersuchungen zur Theologie des chronistischen Geschichtswerkes* (Freiburger theologische Studien 92; Freiburg im Breisgau – Basel – Wien 1973) 77-78, note 86.

²¹ See R.W. KLEIN, *1 Chronicles. A Commentary* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis, MN 2006) 115.

to recall that a numerical sum at the end of genealogical lists of names is a common literary–compositional feature in the Chronistic writing (see, for example, 1 Chr 2,3-4 with similar structure as in 3,1-5; 3,4a.22-24; 5,13; 7,1). It is implausible to consider all those numerical sums as late glosses. These sum numbers were apparently done by the Chronicler in order to prevent additions to or deletions from the list, either deliberately or because of erroneous interpretation. For example, the number “nine”, which closes the list of David’s sons born in Jerusalem (1 Chr 3,5-8) indicates that the repetition of the names *אלישבע* and *אליפלט* is not a mistake and that the names are not to be omitted²².

Other scholars, such as Frederick E. Greenspahn, wonder: “It is hard to imagine what could have motivated the Chronicler to have moved his (i.e., Solomon’s, I.K.) name to the end of such a list”²³. Likewise, a decade later, Gary N. Knoppers asserts: “It is unclear why the author (= the Chronicler, I.K.) makes this claim (i.e., “four by Bathshua [...]”, I.K.)”²⁴. Nearly at the same time, Steven L. McKenzie suggested as follows: “It may be that the Chronicler sought conformity with the pattern in verses 1-3 of naming the mothers. Since Bathsheba is the only Jerusalem mother mentioned in 2 Samuel and since Solomon was clearly her son, the Chronicler assigned the first four names on the list (that is, up to Solomon inclusive) to her”²⁵. But if indeed “the Chronicler sought conformity with the pattern in verses 1-3”, he could be factually accurate by assigning only Solomon to Bathsheba, and naming other mother(s) name(s) to the remaining three sons. Moreover, McKenzie’s suggestion portrays the Chronicler as a poor writer who was ready to “pay too much for too little”. In other words, the Chronicler was prepared to be totally inaccurate and contradictory by attributing four sons to Bathsheba (while she had

²² Cf. I. KALIMI, *Zur Geschichtsschreibung des Chronisten*. Literarisch-historiographische Abweichungen der Chronik von ihren Paralleltexen in den Samuel- und Königsbüchern (BZAW 226; Berlin – New York 1995) 250; see also the example and discussion on pp. 266-273; Id., *The Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History in Chronicles* (Winona Lake, IN 2012) 296, 315-324.

²³ See F.E. GREENSPAHN, *When Brothers Dwell Together*. The Preeminence of Younger Siblings in the Hebrew Bible (Oxford 1994) 78.

²⁴ See G.N. KNOPPERS, *I Chronicles 1-9*. A Translation with Introduction and Commentary (AB 12A; New York 2004) 325.

²⁵ See S.L. MCKENZIE, *1-2 Chronicles* (Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries; Nashville, TN 2004) 76.

only one son) and putting Solomon in the fourth place (while he was her first surviving son), just in order to keep “conformity with the pattern” in his *Vorlage*, even without delivering any substantial message to his potential readers. Furthermore, if McKenzie’s suggestion is correct, why did the Chronicler not name the mother(s) of the other nine sons of David (3,6-8), not to mention the unnamed sons born to unnamed concubines (3,9)?

Recently Thomas Willi touches this problem as well. He asserts that the fact that Solomon was the first surviving son of his mother could not have been overlooked by the Chronicler; however, the order of the names in his *Vorlage* (2 Samuel 5) was obligatory for him. Although one cannot but agree with the first part of Willi’s statement, the second part of it, however, is doubtful: if it is as Willi supposes, why does not the Chronicler keep the order of names as they appear in his *Vorlage* in several other places (for example, compare 1 Chr 21,2 with 2 Sam 24,2; 2 Chr 9,28 with 1 Kgs 10,28; 2 Chr 8,7 with 1 Kgs 9,20)? Nonetheless, Willi observes that “It is difficult to answer the question, if he (i.e., the Chronicler, I.K.) sees Bathshua just as the mother of Solomon or also as the mother of the first three mentioned sons, Shimea, Shobab and Nathan”²⁶. But how could the Chronicler articulate his opinion on this question more clearly than what he wrote: “Shimea, Shobab, Nathan, and Solomon four by Bathshua, daughter of Ammiel”?

In my opinion, 1 Chr 3,5c comes from the hand of the Chronicler. This issue, which I briefly discussed elsewhere (and for whatever reason some scholars are unaware of it)²⁷, is explicitly developed in the current article. Most likely the Chronicler knew that Solomon was the first surviving son of Bathsheba. But still he structured the list of David’s four sons born in Jerusalem, which he found in 2 Samuel 5, according to the literary numerical pattern of “three–four” (or “three + one”). In his newly created structure, Solomon appears as the fourth and final son of Bathsheba. By doing so the Chronicler attempts to demonstrate the importance of Solomon by stressing that he was born in Jerusalem, and by positioning him in the fourth and last place. In

²⁶ “Schwierig ist die Frage zu beantworten, ob ihm (d.h., dem Chronist, I.K.) Batschua nur als Mutter Salomos gilt oder auch als die der drei erstgeborenen Söhne Schima, Schobab und Natan”; see WILLI, *Chronik*, 111.

²⁷ See KALIMI, *Zur Geschichtsschreibung des Chronisten*, 306; ID., *Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History*, 365.

other words, although Solomon was the youngest son of Bathsheba, he, above all, was elected to inherit the throne of King David. The author wished to state that all the three older sons of Bathsheba were not worthy of the kingship, but her youngest son, Solomon, was granted that value.

In fact, this literary feature is common in the Hebrew Bible in general and in other places in the book of Chronicles, in particular ²⁸. Thus, for example, in 1 Chr 28,4-5 (an “addition”) the Chronicler describes Solomon as God’s chosen king. And also there he forms his description, once again, in the literary numerical pattern of “three–four”, where he locates Solomon in the fourth and final place. Moreover, this literary feature appears also regarding the structuring of the lists of the sons of Josiah in 1 Chr 3,15, and the sons of Saul in 1 Chr 8,33 (= 9,39) ²⁹. To mention just one example from out of the Chronicist work: Judah is also mentioned in the fourth place among the sons of Jacob: after rejection of the first three sons — Reuben, Simeon, and Levi — (because of their evil deeds), Judah took the favorable spot, and the kingdom is related to him (Gen 49,3-12; and see also Genesis 34; 35,22).

In addition, the importance of Solomon also emerges from his location in the list of David’s sons, as correctly noted by Klein, “Of the nineteen sons of David mentioned in verses 1-8, Solomon occupies position number ten, the exact center, with nine before him and nine after him” ³⁰.

It is questionable, at least in the case under review, if the Chronicler indeed had “access to sources unknown to the Deuteronomist” ³¹. Moreover, even if the Chronicler had access to such a source, it still should not be automatically assumed that the source was historically reliable and should be preferred over the old tradition in the book of

²⁸ For a detailed discussion, see KALIMI, *Zur Geschichtsschreibung des Chronisten*, 305-310, esp. 305-307; ID., *Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History*, 362-368, esp. 362-364.

²⁹ For a discussion on these lists in Chronicles, see KALIMI, *Zur Geschichtsschreibung des Chronisten*, 306-307; ID., *Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History*, 364.

³⁰ See KLEIN, *1 Chronicles*, 116.

³¹ See S.S. TUELL, *First and Second Chronicles* (Interpretation; Louisville, KY 2001) 25. Cf. RUDOLPH, *Chronikbücher*, 26, who assumes that the post-Chronicist writer added this chapter (i.e., 1 Chronicles 3) to the book of Chronicles, and based his information on extra-biblical sources.

Samuel. Accordingly, it is mistaken to deduce any historical conclusion from the text of 1 Chr 3,5c, given the well-known literary motif “youngest-son-rises-to-power”, the literary formulation of the earlier text from Samuel in numerical structure of “three–four”, and the honored spot “ten”, which is itself a typological number (compare, for example, Gen 31,7.41; Lev 26,26; Num 14,22; Job 19,3; Dan 1,20)³².

II. The Names of Solomon in the Second Temple Period Literature

1. *The Meanings of “Shelomoh” in Chronicles*

While according to the Deuteronomistic history Bathsheba’s son received two names – Shelomoh and Yedidyah (2 Sam 12,24-25), in the Chronistic history the child was presented only with the one name Shelomoh. This name was given to him neither by David nor by Bathsheba (2 Sam 12,24)³³, but rather by the Lord himself, even before his birth:

ויהי עלי דבר יהוה לאמור...
הנה בן נולד לך הוא יהיה איש מנוחה והנחותי לו מכל-אויביו מסביב
כי שלמה יהיה שמו ושלום ושקט אתן על-ישראל בימיו.

And the word of the Lord came to me, saying ... Behold, a son shall be born to you, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies around; for his name shall be *Shelomoh*, and I will give *shalom* (= peace) and quiet to Israel in his days (1 Chr 22,8-9; an “addition”)³⁴.

It seems that although the name *Shelomoh* is not mentioned (or even alluded to) in the Nathan prophecy (1 Chronicles 17 // 2

³² On this issue see in more detail, KALIMI, *Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History*, 363-364, with references to scholars who load this text with historical credibility (e.g., S. Yeivin).

³³ On this matter, see the discussion by KALIMI, “Solomon’s Birth Story within Its Biblical-Historical Setting”.

³⁴ In his commentary on 2 Sam 12,24 David Kimchi states that the Lord — rather than David — called his name “Solomon”. Thus he harmonizes the contradictory texts of Samuel and Chronicles.

Samuel 7), the Chronicler retrospectively (*post eventum*) considered Solomon's birth, reign, and Temple building as fulfillment of Nathan's prophecy (1 Chr 17,11-12 // 2 Sam 7,12-13)³⁵. Thus the Chronicler went one step further and deduced that Solomon's name was also given by the Lord himself. According to him, the child was named Shelomoh, before he was born, against the background of his future peaceful period of reign. Notice, by the phrase:

והנחותי לו מכל-אויביו מסביב

the Chronicler refers — in chiastic order — to 2 Sam 7,1b:

ויהיה הניחילו מסביב מכל איביו

(though there the phrase was said regarding David, the Chronicler omitted it for his own reasons)³⁶.

The phenomenon of naming a child by God or divine messenger before his birth most likely was known to the Chronicler from other cases in the earlier "biblical" writing, for example, regarding Ishmael and Isaac (Gen 16,11; 17,19) as well as from the report in 1 Kgs 13,2 regarding King Josiah of Judah, and in Isa 7,14 regarding the young woman's child that shall be called "Immanu-El"³⁷. The phenomenon of assigning someone to a high position, already in his mother's womb, is also well known in biblical and ancient Near Eastern literature (e.g., Jer 1,4-5 and Isa 49,1)³⁸.

The Chronistic historian provides double explanations for the name *Shelomoh* (both in texts that have no parallel in the Hebrew Bible or elsewhere):

The first one derives the name *Shelomoh* from the word *shalom*, as stated in 1 Chr 22,9. As is expounded above, possibly the Chronicler interpreted the name *Shelomoh* against the background of the

³⁵ On this issue, see in detail KALIMI, "The Rise of Solomon in the Ancient Israelite Historiography", 38-40.

³⁶ See KALIMI, *Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History*, 36-39. For the relation of these verses in Chronicles to Nathan's Prophecy (2 Samuel 7 // 1 Chronicles 17), see also below in this study.

³⁷ See also later on in Matt 1,21.

³⁸ See in detail KALIMI, "The Rise of Solomon in the Ancient Israelite Historiography", 22-23 and note 64.

person's peaceful period. Thus, the name of the king refers to his peaceful epoch. At the same time, it is also possible that the Chronicler borrowed this explanation from earlier scriptures, such as 1Kgs 5,4-5 (ET: 4,24-25):

וְשָׁלוֹם הָיָה לוֹ מִכָּל־עֲבָרָיו מִסָּבִיב וַיֵּשֶׁב יְהוּדָה וְיִשְׂרָאֵל לְבֶטֶח
אִישׁ תַּחַת גִּפְנוֹ וְתַחַת תְּאֵנָתוֹ מִדָּן וְעַד־בְּאֵר שֶׁבַע כָּל יְמֵי שְׁלֹמֹה

And he had *shalom* (peace) on all sides around him. And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, from Dan to Beersheba, all the days of *Shelomoh*.

See also Psalm 72, which is ascribed to Solomon, and where the name is also derived from the word *shalom* (see particularly verses 3 and 7). Nonetheless, the Chronicler made his explanation straight and clear.

The second explanation derives the name *Shelomoh* from the word *shalem* (= "complete", "perfect"). This explanation refers to the king himself. It appears twice in Chronicles, both as puns: once in 1 Chr 28,9:

וְאַתָּה שְׁלֹמֹה־בְנִי דַע אֶת־אֱלֹהֵי אָבִיךָ וְעֲבַדְהוּ בְּלֵב שָׁלֵם וּבְנֶפֶשׁ חַפְצָה

And you, *Shelomoh*, my son, know the God of your father, and serve him with a *shalem* heart and a willing spirit.

And once again in 1 Chr 29,19:

וְלִשְׁלֹמֹה בְנִי תֵן לֵב שָׁלֵם לְשִׁמּוֹר מִצְוֹתֶיךָ

And as for *Shelomoh* my son, give him a *shalem* heart that he may observe your commandments ³⁹.

³⁹ For the explanation of the name Solomon in the books of Kings and Chronicles, see I. KALIMI, "Utilization of Pun/Paronomasia in the Chronistic Writing", *An Ancient Israelite Historian*, 67-81, esp. 77-78, 79.

2. The Name “Yedidyah” in Psalms, Nehemiah, Chronicles, and Josephus

Though the exact time of Psalm 127 is unknown, it seems that it was composed in the First Temple period, and at some time was ascribed to King Solomon (verse 1a). The words *כֵּן יִתֵּן לְיָדִידּוֹ שָׁנָא* (“for truly to his beloved he gives sleep”) ⁴⁰ in verse 2 probably alludes to the name “Yedidyah” in 2 Sam 12,25.

The name Yedidyah is also alluded to in Nehemiah ⁴¹. Contrary to the Chronicler who omits any clues to Solomon’s sins, the author of this late biblical historical composition states that King Solomon was led astray by foreign women (Neh 13,26a), as is recounted in the Deuteronomistic history (1 Kgs 11,1-13; 2 Kgs 23,13) ⁴². According to this verse in Nehemiah, Solomon sinned despite the fact that he was “beloved to his God” (*וְאֵהוּב לֵאלֹהֵי הָיָה*, Neh 13,26b). This phrase clearly refers to “the Lord loved him” and the name Yedidyah in 2 Sam 12,24-25, though the name itself does not appear in Nehemiah.

As already mentioned above (see §I), the Chronicler does not use the theophoric name “Yedidyah” in his book. In addition to the explanation that we suggested there, one can clarify this issue also as follows: for the Chronicler, David and Bathsheba’s fourth child had only one name, i.e., Solomon. This name had been given to the child directly by the Lord with His special blessing, even before he was born. So, the Chronicler has no need to refer to the name Yedidyah that has been given to the new-born child by the prophet Nathan (2 Sam 12,25).

Interestingly, also Josephus does not mention the name Yedidyah. In the *Jewish Antiquity* 7.158 he writes: “... and she conceived and

⁴⁰ On the word *שָׁנָא*, see the discussion in F.L. HOSSFELD – E. ZENGER, *Psalmen 101-150* (HThKAT; Freiburg im B. – Basel – Wien 2008) 528-529.

⁴¹ In 2 Kgs 22,1 “Jedidiah” appears as a female name — the name of King Josiah’s mother.

⁴² The author of Neh 13,26 could refer only to the Deuteronomistic history which in this case served his purpose well. In any case, he could not refer to Chronicles, because the Chronistic history did not exist yet. Moreover, even if one would assume that Chronicles had existed, still the Chronicler does not mention any sin of Solomon. See KALIMI, *Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History*, 8-9; ID., “The Date of the Book of Chronicles”, *An Ancient Israelite Historian*, 41-65, esp. 54-56.

bore a son, whom he named Solomon, at the bidding of the prophet Nathan". However, according to 2 Sam 12,25 Nathan named the child: "Yedidyah", while David (or Bathsheba) named him: "Solomon". Is Josephus influenced by the Chronicler who recounts that it was the Lord who gave the name "Solomon" to the child, and thus never mentions the name "Yedidyah"?

3. Ben Sira's Word-Plays on the Names "Shelomoh" and "Yedidyah"

In the last part of his book, *the Praise of the Ancestors* (Ben Sira 44-50), Joshua Ben Sira (ca. 180 B.C.E.) mentions several kings of Israel, among them Solomon. The author praises Solomon but in the same breath also rebukes him⁴³. He dedicates 20 verses to him (47,19-34; ET: 12-23a), almost equal to the space that he dedicated to his father, David (18 verses; 47,1-18; ET: 1-11). What is relevant to our theme under review is Ben Sira's word-plays (puns) on both names Shelomoh and Yedidyah.

In Ben Sira 47,19 (ET: 13) he derives the name *Shelomoh* from the noun *shalvah* ("peace", "serene", "quietude"): שלמה מלך בימי שלווה / ואל הניח לו מסביב ("Solomon reigned during an age of peace / because God gave him rest [from his enemies] around"). This derivation is similar to that of the Chronicler, *Shelomoh* – *shalom* in 1 Chr 22,8-9 (see above). Later on, in the Hebrew text of Ben Sira 47,25 (ET: 18) the author connects Solomon's name with the divine name, most likely referring to the name Yedidyah in 2 Sam 12,25: נקראת בשם הנכבד / הנקרא על ישראל ("You were called by the honored name which is called upon Israel")⁴⁴. In fact, in several scriptures Israel was also called *yedid* (beloved) of the Lord or the one whom God loves (e.g., Jer 11,15; 14,9; Deut 28,10; Isa 63,9).

⁴³ On Solomon in the book of Ben Sira, see P.A. TORIJANO, *Solomon the Esoteric King*. From King to Magus. Development of Tradition (JSJ Suppl. 73; Leiden 2002); P.C. BEENTJES, "'The Countries Marveled at You.' King Solomon in Ben Sira 47,12-22", *"Happy the One Who Meditates on Wisdom"* (Sir. 14,20). Collected Essays on the Book of Ben Sira (CBET 43; Leuven 2006) 135-144 (= *Bijdragen* 45 [1984] 6-14); B.G. WRIGHT III, "Solomon in Chronicles and Ben Sira", *Rewriting Biblical History*. Essays on Chronicles and Ben Sira in Honor of Pancratius C. Beentjes (eds. J. CORLEY – H. VAN GROL) (Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature Studies 7; Berlin – New York 2011) 139-157.

⁴⁴ Compare, for example, P.W. SKEHAN – A.A. DI LELLA, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira*. A New Translation with Notes, Introduction and Commentary (AB 39; New York 1987) 527. The Greek version offers a different interpretation.

Moshe Zvi Segal's interpretation of the words "You were called by the honored name" as referring also to the name *Shelomoh*, connected with the word *shalom*⁴⁵, is less probable. Although the word *shalom* is used as a divine name in the rabbinic literature (e.g., *Sifre* on Num 6,24; Deut 28,10), it is not clear if it was used also in the Scriptures. Segal refers to the commemorative name יהוה שלום in the declaration of Gideon, regarding the altar that he built (Judg 6,24):

ויבן שם גרעון מזבח ליהוה ויקרא לו יהוה שלום

But this means "the Lord is agreeing" (or even "[altar of] the Lord of Peace/safety", as some consider the noun שלום as genitive)⁴⁶. In fact, there are several examples of altars with commemorative names:

Gen 33,20,	ויצב שם מזבח ויקרא לו אל אלהי ישראל
Gen 35,7,	ויבן שם מזבח ויקרא למקום אל בית-אל
Exod 17,15:	ויבן משה מזבח ויקרא שמו יהוה נסי

Similar kinds of names are, for example, יהוה יראה (Gen 22,14), יהוה צדקנו (Jer 33,16), יהוה שמה (Ezek 48,35). No one considers יהוה or צדקנו or שמה as God's names, so why should we consider the word שלום in Judg 6,24 as God's name?

4. Was "Qoheleth" the Third Name of Solomon?

The book of Qoheleth (/Kohleleth) claims that its author was "Qoheleth" and presents him as one who reigns in Jerusalem and who, like Solomon, is seeking wisdom (cf. Qoh 1,12-13 with 1 Kgs 3,6-9). Like Solomon, Qoheleth also was very wise and rich (Qoh 1,16-18; 2,4-9). Thus, Qoheleth in the book under review, who has identified himself in the book as a king and the son of David (Qoh 1,1.12), is meant to be Solomon. No wonder, therefore, that the Talmudic sages assumed that in addition to the names Shelomoh and

⁴⁵ See M.Z. SEGAL, *Sefer Ben Sira Hashalem* (Jerusalem 1972) 328 (Hebrew).

⁴⁶ Cf. G.F. MOORE, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Judges* (ICC; Edinburgh 1895) 189; Y. KAUFMANN, *The Book of Judges* (Jerusalem 1973) 162 (Hebrew).

Yedidyah, Solomon bore a third name that appears in Ecclesiastes: Qoheleth. The rabbis explain that Solomon was also called *Qoheleth* (from *qhl*, “the one who assembles”) because he taught/talked in assemblies, as it says: “Then assembled Solomon [...]” (1 Kgs 8,1) ⁴⁷. A similar opinion was expressed also by some medieval Jewish commentators, such as Rashi (“he assembled numerous wisdoms”), Rabbi Abraham ibn Ezra ⁴⁸, and also by some modern exegetes, for instance, Mordechai Zer-Kabod ⁴⁹. However, as already noted in biblical research, the similarities between Solomon and Qoheleth are just Solomonic fiction in the first chapters of the book of Qoheleth, which “the prosaically minded editor mistook for authorship” ⁵⁰. In fact, the name “Solomon” never appears in the book of Qoheleth and, despite all that is mentioned above, there is no explicit identification of Qoheleth with Solomon in this or any other biblical book. That Solomon could not be the author of Qoheleth is clear from the post-exilic Hebrew of the book, and from the late date of the composition (Persian or even early Hellenistic period as some scholars assume) ⁵¹. Moreover, the author of Qoh 6,2 uses an idiom from the book of Chronicles (2 Chr 1,11b) ⁵², which was composed in the Persian era. Thus, the language and the late date of the book contradict identification of Qoheleth with Solomon. Probably, the rabbis’ intention was to identify the unknown speaker of the book with the well-known biblical prototype of wisdom, i.e., Solomon, and attribute to him the disputed holiness of the book of Qoheleth (Babylonian Talmud, *Sabbath* 30b; *Abbot deRabbi Nathan*, Text A, I) ⁵³, in order to include it

⁴⁷ See Midrash *Qoheleth Rabbah* 1,1; Midrash *Song of Songs Rabbah* 1,1; *Seder Olam Rabbah* 15; Babylonian Talmud, *Baba Bathra* 15a.

⁴⁸ See their commentaries on Qoh 1,1.

⁴⁹ See M. ZER-KABOD, *Qoheleth* (Daat Mikra; Jerusalem 1973) 3-4, 8 (Hebrew).

⁵⁰ G.A. BARTON, *The Book of Ecclesiastes* (ICC; Edinburgh 1908) 58-59, 67; see also R.E. MURPHY, *Ecclesiastes* (WBC 23A; Dallas, TX 1992) 1-2; B. WILLMES, *Menschliches Schicksal und ironische Weisheitskritik im Koheletbuch* (Biblich-Theologische Studien 39; Neukirchen-Vluyn 2000) 80-82; L. SCHWIENHORST-SCHÖNBERGER, *Kohelet* (HThKAT; Freiburg im B. – Basel – Wien 2004) 140-141.

⁵¹ On this issue, see the secondary literature listed by KALIMI, “The Date of the Book of Chronicles”, *An Ancient Israelite Historian*, 51, note 52.

⁵² See KALIMI, *Retelling of Chronicles*, 17.

⁵³ For *Abbot deRabbi Nathan*, Text A, I, see J. GOLDIN (ed.), *The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan* (Yale Judaica Series 10; New Haven, CT 1955) 5.

in the Jewish/Hebrew Canon. It is noteworthy that also the inclusion of Proverbs and the Song of Songs in the Hebrew canon was disputed among the rabbis. Finally they were accepted into the canon due to their attribution to King Solomon.

A typological example for such a process could be pointed out in the Christian canon of the New Testament. The author of the Letter to the Hebrews does not belong to the first generation of Christians. Rather, the Letter to the Hebrews was composed some time about 80 C.E., and “by the end of the second century some were attributing Hebrews to Paul”, in order to include it in the Christian canon. Finally, in the official late 4th and early 5th century canonical lists, “Hebrews was counted within the fourteen Pauline letters” of the Christian canon ⁵⁴.

III. Conclusion: The Ambiguity of Solomon

This study discusses the birth and names of Solomon in late biblical historical literature, particularly in the Chronistic history. In the latter, Solomon is represented as one who was born under normal circumstances, as the fourth and the youngest son of Bathsheba, but still gained the kingship. The list of Bathsheba’s children is formed in the literary form of “three–four”, and Solomon is located in the fourth and last place among them. He is in the middle of the nineteen names, i.e., in the tenth place. The Chronicler completely excluded from his book the story of David and Bathsheba and even a hint to it, and the birth and death of their first son. These stories are not in accordance with the Chronicler’s descriptions of core Israelite figures. Moreover, the birth of the first son of Bathsheba and his death also conflict with the Chronicler’s strict theological line of thought regarding reward and punishment. According to the Chronicler, God elected Solomon as his chosen king, and he himself called him “Solomon” (rather than “Yedidyah” as in 2 Sam 12,25). The Chronicler interprets Solomon’s name twice, explaining the root of it in different ways (*Shelomoh – shalom* and *Shelomoh – shalem*). He did not feel any necessity to mention the name Yedidyah, because it may hint at David’s adultery with Bathsheba, and because the name Solomon itself has been given to the child by the Lord even prior to his birth. The books of Psalms and

⁵⁴ See, e.g., R.E. BROWN, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (The Anchor Bible Reference Library; New York 1997) 693-697, esp. 693.

Nehemiah refer to the name Yedidyah, although they do not mention it explicitly.

In *the Praise of the Ancestors*, Ben Sira derives the name *Shelomoh* from the noun *shalvah* ("peace"), and the name *Yedidyah* as it is explained in 2 Sam 12,25. "Qoheleth son of David" is not identical with Solomon. This identification is hinted at in the first chapters of the book and suggested explicitly later on in the post-biblical Jewish tradition, in order to include the book of Qoheleth within the Hebrew canon.

One can admit two clear trends in the Jewish literature of Second Temple time: the one (Chronicles and Qoheleth, which later were followed by the rabbis) only praised the king. The Chronicler used only the name "Solomon", while the author of the opening chapters of the wisdom book refers to him as "Qoheleth". However, they both (and Josephus) ignore the theophoric name "Yedidyah". The other trend (Nehemiah and Ben Sira) praises the king but in the same breath also rebukes him. Though given the name "Yedidyah" ("beloved of the Lord"), the king still sinned. It seems that both trends had a didactical purpose. The former presents a role model of a completely righteous king. In contrast, the latter demonstrates that even the "beloved of the Lord" failed, despite his great wisdom. Therefore, one should be always careful with divine commandments.

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SUMMARY

In Chronicles Solomon is represented as one who was born under normal circumstances. He appears in the center of David's nineteen descendants, and as the youngest of Bathsheba's four sons, but still gained the kingship. The name "Solomon" was given to the child by God prior to his birth and He elected him as king. The root of the name was interpreted twice, but there is no mention of "Yedidyah". The allusions to or ignorance of the name "Yedidyah" in Psalms, Nehemiah, Chronicles, and Josephus, as well as the question if "Qoheleth" is Solomon's third name, are also discussed.

On the Meaning of Job 4,18

I. The *hapax legomenon* in 4,18

The Book of Job is generally acclaimed as the greatest poem of ancient or modern times. Terrien wrote: "The literary mastery of the poet is unsurpassed in the Old Testament, and his stylistic versatility, vigor, conciseness and elegance are probably superior to those of any other poet"¹. A special position in this unusual book is held by Eliphaz's speeches. Rowley characterized them by saying: "The speech of Eliphaz is one of the masterpieces of the book"². Job 4,18 is one of the verses in Eliphaz's first speech. It reads:

If he cannot trust His own servants, הֵן בְּעַבְדָּיו לֹא יֶאֱמִין
And casts reproach on His angels³, וּבַמַּלְאָכָיו יִשְׁמָתְהֶם

This verse was subject to considerable debate because of the *hapax legomenon* תִּהְלֶלְהוּ, which elicited much guess-work. Dhorme observes that "L'hapax תִּהְלֶלְהוּ a choqué quelques commentateurs"⁴. Though much exegetical effort focused on deciphering the meaning of תִּהְלֶלְהוּ, still one cannot confidently state that a satisfactory solution has been found.

Chaham, in a somewhat optimistic spirit, says that despite the many different interpretations that have been offered, "anyway the meaning is clear"⁵. What seems to be clear from the conclusion of the *a minori ad majus* (*qal wahomer* in Talmudic terminology) structure in vv. 18-19, and the parallelism of the cola in v. 18, is that v. 18b must also express some dissatisfaction with God's emissaries⁶. How-

¹ S. TERRIEN, *The Book of Job*. Introduction and Exegesis (Interpreter's Bible 3; New York 1954) 1892.

² H.H. ROWLEY, "The Book of Job and Its Meaning", *BJRL* 41 (1958) 199, n. 1. Rowley quotes Davidson.

³ *NJPS* translation.

⁴ E. DHORME, *Le livre de Job* (EB; Paris 1926) 48.

⁵ A. CHAHAM, סֵפֶר אִיּוֹב (Jerusalem 1981) 35, n. 27.

⁶ א קל וחומר (lit. "light and weighty") is a rhetorical principle whereby a conclusion is drawn from a minor premise, or a more lenient condition

ever, what specifically was this dissatisfaction remained an enigma, leading to many speculations regarding the meaning of לְהַלֵּל.

In addition to the difficulties of finding an acceptable meaning for לְהַלֵּל, commentators disagree on who is making the statements in vv. 18-19. Some attribute them to the “voice” (v. 16), others consider them to be Eliphaz’s conclusion from the “visions of the night”⁷. The extent of the dream vision is not clear. It could consist of only verse 17, with verses 18-21 being Eliphaz’s exposition. Many assume that the vision continues to the end of the chapter. Among the reasons for this position are: the continued use of the third person for God (in v. 17 and v. 18); the explanatory “Behold” in v. 18; the request for agreement in v. 21; and the clear transition in 5,1 to that addressing Job’s complaints in chapter 3. Others felt the debating style requires a referent that is not the “voice” itself. It is also not clear who is referred to in the terms “his servants” (עֲבָדָיו) and “his angels” (מַלְאָכָיו), and what is the distinction between the two categories. Moreover, it is not obvious how one should understand the term שִׁמְשֵׁם, and what is the extent of its semantic field? Finally, one would be naturally intrigued by the relation between 4,18 and the seemingly similar variants in Eliphaz’s second speech (15,15) and in Bildad’s speech (25,5)?

The purpose of this paper is to respond to these questions by presenting a new interpretation of לְהַלֵּל, elucidating the terms used in v. 18, and discussing the meaning of the verse in its context.

II. Problems of Terminology in Job 4,18

In Job 4,18 and 15,15 Eliphaz refers to some obscure tradition regarding God’s attitude towards his heavenly agents, to buttress his argument with respect to humans. Whybray says: “The background to this statement about the angels is obscure. There is certainly no idea here of rebellious or ‘fallen’ angels as in some of the apocryphal literature and in later theology, though the myth of the ‘sons of God’ who intermarried with human women (Gen. 6.1-

(“light”), to a major or more strict one (“weighty”), or vice versa, forming an *a fortiori* argument.

⁷ F.I. ANDERSEN, *Job. An Introduction and Commentary* (London 1976) 114.

4) may belong to the same tradition”⁸. Subsequently, Bildad paraphrases the same notion in 25,5 referring only to celestial bodies, the moon and the stars. How did commentators fuse these paraphrases into a single concept? The analysis of v. 18 will first focus on the inner-verse referents for עבדיו and מלאכיו, then assess the current understanding of שׂים, and finally discuss the current status of the term תהלה.

1. The terms עבדיו and מלאכיו

The terms עבד and מלאך have the basic meanings “slave, servant” and “messenger”, respectively. The Septuagint’s rendering of these terms by “servant” (παῖς) and “angel” (ἄγγελος) indicates that it understood them as being heavenly entities, and so apparently did the Peshitta, which uses the terms בעבדיו and במלאכיהו, and the Vulgate, which uses *qui serviunt* and *angelis*. The Targums by translating “his servants the prophets” (בעבדיו נביא) and “his messengers, runners” (באזגדיו), understood the referent to be both earthly and heavenly.

A similar diversity of views can be found among the classical Jewish exegetes. Rashi (1040-1105) considers “servants” being the righteous and “messengers” being apparently the angels. Ibn Ezra (1089-c. 1164) considers both categories referring to heavenly entities, and so does Rashbam (c. 1085-1174)⁹. Ralbag (1288-1344) seems to be associating 4,18a and 15,15a, taking “his servants” as “his holy”, apparently holy persons. He understands v. 18 as stating that God is the cause of all but not caused by anyone else. It is not clear from Ramban’s (1194-1270) statement that “neither ‘his servants’ nor ‘his emissaries’ are privy to God’s secrets” whether these two categories are heavenly entities or not.

Among the modern commentators the diversity is considerably more limited. For instance, Duhm considers עבדיו and מלאכיו being made of “der edlen, feineren Materie, der רוח”¹⁰. Kissane thinks that “His servants are the angels of 18b”¹¹. Dhorme argues that the paral-

⁸ N. WHYBRAY, *Job* (Sheffield 1998) 43.

⁹ S. JAPHET, *The Commentary of Rabbi Samuel Ben Meir (Rashbam) on the Book of Job* (Jerusalem 2000) 354.

¹⁰ D.B. DUHM, *Das Buch Hiob erklärt* (KHC; Tübingen 1897) 29.

¹¹ E.J. KISSANE, *The Book of Job* (Dublin 1939) 26. He says: “The argument is repeated in similar terms in xv. 15-16”. This position cannot be correct.

lelism of the two cola in 4,18 forces the conclusion that the servants are the angels of 18b, and this position is supported by the narrative frame (1,6; 2,1) and by the parallelism between “angels” and “those who serve him” in Ps 104,4¹². However, Ps 104,4 does not speak of angels, but rather of natural phenomena: He makes the winds his messengers, fiery flames his servants. Chaham says that the two terms refer to the **בְּנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים** in 1,6 and 2,1, but not to earthly righteous¹³. In Pope’s view the two terms allude to “the lesser gods who with the development of monotheism became angels. ... In the Ugaritic myths, the major deities have special divine lackies who mostly serve as messengers”¹⁴. A more realistic perception of the two terms has been suggested by Tur-Sinai who says: “According to the parallel passages, the reference is not only to angels and divine beings proper, but also to the sun, the moon, stars which too are still felt to be godly beings, God’s servants and messengers”¹⁵. It is doubtful that Tur-Sinai’s catch-all approach can be logically defended. Jastrow renders the terms **עֲבָדָיו** and **מַלְאָכָיו** by “servants” and “messengers,” respectively¹⁶.

The prevailing opinion seems to be that the terms **עֲבָדָיו** and **מַלְאָכָיו** refer to supernatural entities. This is almost required by the comparison in vv. 18-19, but is not compelling. As Weiss noted, while the views held by commentators can be inferred from juxtaposing the two opposing positions in the *qal wahomer*, they are not explicitly stated in the text¹⁷. Indeed, as will be shown, the two terms admit meanings which are more realistic than the world of angels and heavenly courts, and which are also theologically less problematic.

¹² DHORME, *Job*, 53.

¹³ CHAHAM, **אִיּוֹב**, 35. Similarly, Habel says: “Perhaps the poet is again making an ironic allusion to roving members of the heavenly court, such as Satan, who challenge God’s judgment (1,6-10)”. Cf. N.C. HABEL, *The Book of Job: A Commentary* (Philadelphia, PA 1985) 129.

¹⁴ M.H. POPE, *Job* (AB 15; Garden City, NY 1986) 37.

¹⁵ N.H. TUR-SINAI, *The Book of Job* (Jerusalem 1967) 85. Hartley apparently adopts a similar approach, saying: “The angels or messengers (**מַלְאָכָיו**) are those who serve (**עֲבָדִים**) God (Ps 104,4)”. Cf. J.E. HARTLEY, *Book of Job* (NICOT; Grand Rapids, MI 1988) 114.

¹⁶ M. JASTROW, *The Book of Job. The Origin, Growth and Interpretation* (Philadelphia, PA 1920) 212.

¹⁷ M. WEISS, “הַמַּטְפוֹרָה בְּנֹאוֹמוֹ הָרִאשׁוֹן שֶׁל אֵל יִפְזֹ”, **סֵפֶר זִידֵל** (eds. A. ELINER et al.) (Jerusalem 1962) 188. Weiss points to the fact that the two metaphors are not fully parallel. For instance, v. 18 does not have something that corresponds to **שְׁכֵנֵי בְּתֵי הַמֶּר** in v. 19; it does not allude to those that dwell up high in heaven.

2. The term שׁוֹׁ

The term שׁוֹׁ usually means “he will put, place, set”. The Septuagint renders שׁוֹׁ by “he perceives” (ἐπενόησε); Targums by “imputes” (שׁוֹׁ); Symmachus by “find” (εὕρησει) and is followed by the Vulgate (*repperit*) and by the Peshitta “he struck” (נִסִּי).

Driver and Gray render שׁוֹׁ by “to lay in” (= “attribute to”) based on 1 Sam 11,15¹⁸. Relying on the same source, the following are some of the translations that have been offered:

Chaham — “decides that there is”¹⁹;

Ewald, Duhm, Gallischewski — “places”, “legt er bei”²⁰;

Driver & Gray, Fullerton, Tur-Sinai, Gibson, Pope, Clines,

Gordis — “charges with, imputes”;²¹

Dillman, Blommerde, Habel, Good — “ascribes”²²;

Jastrow, Horst, Grabbe — “he notes”²³; and,

Beuken — “he points out”²⁴.

It is obvious that the Versions had no idea how to translate here שׁוֹׁ, and resorted to meanings that they thought would fit the context. The parallelism between the passages 4,18; 15,15; and 25,5 suggests that: לֹא זָכוּ בְּעֵינָיו || יִשִּׁים תְּהִלָּה.

¹⁸ S.R. DRIVER – G.B. GRAY, *A Critical Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Job* (ICC; Edinburgh 1921) II, 26.

¹⁹ CHAHAM, אִיּוֹב, 35.

²⁰ G.H.A. EWALD, *Commentary on the Book of Job* (London 1882) 108; DUHM, *Hiob*, 28; E. GALLISCHEWSKI, “Die Erste Elifaz-Rede Hiob Kap. 4 und 5”, *ZAW* 39 (1921) 294; etc.

²¹ S.R. DRIVER – G.B. GRAY, *A Critical Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Job* (ICC; Edinburgh 1921) I, 47; K. FULLERTON, “Double Entendre in the First Speech of Eliphaz”, *JBL* 49 (1930) 323; TUR-SINAI, *Job*, 84; J.C.L. GIBSON, “Eliphaz the Temanite: Portrait of a Hebrew Philosopher”, *SJT* 28 (1975) 266; POPE, *Job*, 35; CLINES, *Job*, 107; R. GORDIS, *The Book of God and Man* (Chicago, IL 1965) 240; etc.

²² A. DILLMANN, *Hiob* (Leipzig 1891) 38; A.C.M. BLOMMERDE, *Northwest Semitic Grammar and Job* (Rome 1969) 28; HABEL, *Job*, 113; and, E.M. GOOD, *In Turns of Tempest. A Reading of Job with a Translation* (Stanford, CA 1990) 59; etc.

²³ JASTROW, *Job*, 212; F. HORST, *Hiob* (Neukirchen-Vluyn 1968) 58; L.L. GRABBE, *Comparative Philology and the Text of Job: A Study in Methodology* (SBLDS 34; Missoula, MT 1975) 41.

²⁴ W.A.M. BEUKEN, “Eliphaz – one among the prophets or ironist spokesman?: The enigma of being a wise man in one’s own right (Job 4-5)”, *Das Buch Hiob und seine Interpretationen. Beiträge zum Hiob-Symposium auf dem Monte Verità vom 14.-19. August 2005* (eds. T. KRÜGER et al.) (Zürich 2007) 302.

3. The term תהלה

The *hapax legomenon* תהלה presented considerable challenges to commentators since the earliest times of biblical exegesis. The Septuagint rendered תהלה by “perverseness, crookedness” (σκολιόν) and is followed by the Vulgate (*pravitatem*); the Targums by “unrighteousness” (עילא)²⁵; Symmachus by “folly” (ματαιότητα); and the Peshitta by “amazement” (תמהא). With regard to this unique term it is obvious that the versions were again at a loss how to translate it and resorted to meanings that they thought would fit the context.

The following are some of the solutions that were suggested for the interpretation of תהלה:

— Emend תהלה to תפלה (“unseemliness”).

Rationale: (a) The word תפלה occurs in a phrase with ישׁים (Job 24,12); (b) all but one letter are the same as in תהלה; (c) תהלה has been miswritten for תפלה²⁶; and (d) the phrase ישׁים תהלה is similar to the phrase נתן תפלה (Job 1,22)²⁷.

Objection: (a) The word תפלה also occurs in a phrase with the word ראית (Jer 23,13); (b) The Ketib-Qere apparatus does not attest to a פ/ה confusion; the letters ה and פ are orthographically dissimilar in both the paleoscript and the square script; and the rationale in (d) represents circuitous reasoning.

— תהלה is derived from the root הלל (“be deceived, foolish, mad”).

Rationale: (a) All the versions (LXX, Targum, Peshitta, Symmachus, Vulgate) use a word for תהלה that is equivalent to “folly” or “transgression”²⁸; (b) the forms תבל “blemish” (from בלל) “fusion” (from מסם) allow one to assume a word תהל (from הלל)

²⁵ GRABBE, *Comparative*, 41. This meaning of עילא is based on the reading עולא. JASTROW, 1070a, mentions the meaning “pretext”, which well fits the context.

²⁶ DRIVER – GRAY, *Critical*, 25.

²⁷ CHAHAM, א״ב, 35.

²⁸ GRABBE, *Comparative*, 41. Grabbe argues that most or all of the versions understood the word to be from the root meaning “be deceived, a fool”.

of which הָהֵל is the feminine ²⁹; and, (c) many believe that a form of the root הָהֵל , “to be foolish,” is etymologically most probable ³⁰.

Objection: (a) The parallelism to the preceding colon may have guided the versions to guess from the context; (b) a word derived from הָהֵל having the same form as הָתַבֵּל and הָתַמַּס would be הָהֵל and it is not obvious that it would have a feminine form, since a feminine form is not attested for הָתַבֵּל and הָתַמַּס ; (c) it is not obvious how the peculiar form הָהֵל was derived from הָהֵל ³¹; the form הָהֵל from הָהֵל is impossible, since the ל has no *dageš* to compensate for the missing ל ³²; the meaning “be deceived, fool, mad” is contextually untenable ³³.

- Derive the meaning of הָהֵל from Ethiopian *tahala* (“wander, error”).

Rationale: The meaning is based on a Semitic word that has similar spelling.

Objection: The meaning has low likelihood since it is based on a word occurring only in Ethiopian.

- Derive the meaning of הָהֵל from an Arabic word with similar spelling.

Rationale: (a) There are words in cognate languages which contain the consonants הָהֵל and have a meaning that fits the context of 18b: in Arabic *wahila* “to go astray,” *tahil* “to be fetid,” *thahlal* “vain,” *tahwil* “threat, reproof” ³⁴.

²⁹ DHORME, *Job*, 53.

³⁰ BEUKEN, “Eliphaz”, 301, n. 25.

³¹ GRABBE, *Comparative*, 42.

³² DRIVER – GRAY, *Critical*, 25. For instance, Dillmann (*Hiob*, 38) notes that the translations of the *Versions* “kann grammatisch nicht mit הָהֵל zusammengebracht werden, so dass es *Torheit* bedeutete”. Cf. also CHAHAM, *אִיּוֹב*, 35, n. 27.

³³ HABEL, *Job*, 116. Habel observes: “The significance of mad angels in this context, however, remains obscure”.

³⁴ TUR-SINAI, *Job*, 85. Tur-Sinai says that הָהֵל “may also be a derivative — originally perhaps pronounced הָהֵל — of the root הָהֵל with the meaning of the Arabic *tahwil* “threat, reproof”. However, the root הָהֵל is not attested in biblical Hebrew (cf. JASTROW, 339a).

Objection: Since these roots do not occur in Hebrew, it would mean that **תהל** is a foreign word; only approximations of **תהל** occur in cognate languages; an etymology that is based on Hebrew should be preferred³⁵; and the sense “err” for *wahila* is rare in classical Arabic³⁶.

- Derive the meaning of **תהל** from Aramaic **הל** (“to be faint, to labor”).

Rationale: (a) The derivation of **תהל** is not forced; and, (b) the meaning of “weakness” fits the context.

Objection: The origin of the word **הל** is unknown; and, the root **הל** is unattested in other Semitic languages.

- Emend **תהל** to **התל** from **התל** (“deceive, mock”).

Rationale: **התל** is attested in Job 13,9 and 17,2.

Objection: The root **תלל** means, “mock, deceive, trifle with”. Neither of these meanings fits the context³⁷.

- Assume that the **ל** in v. 18a applies also to v. 18b, and revocalize **תהל** to **תהל**³⁸.

Rationale: (a) There is no need for emendation of the consonantal text; (b) in vv. 15,15 and 25,5, which are the rephrased version of v. 4,18, another **ל** occurs in the second colon; and, (c) the noun **תהל** and verb **תלל** are collocated in Ps 106,12.

Objection: The reading “and ascribes no glory to his angels” does not convey any deficiency in the angels, which would be on a par with being “untrustworthy”; and, in the apparent paraphrase of this verse

³⁵ DHORME, *Job*, 53.

³⁶ CLINES, *Job*, 112. Cf. J. BARTH, *Nominalbildung in den semitischen Sprachen* (Leipzig 1894) 278.

³⁷ HABEL, *Job*, 116. In Habel’s opinion “‘mock, deceives’ [gives] a sense consistent with the context”. Also Tur-Sinai (*Job*, 85) says: “This word has, perhaps correctly, been explained as a metathetic variant of **התל**”.

³⁸ See for instance, A.B. EHRLICH, *Randglossen zur hebräischen Bibel, VI. Psalmen, Sprüche, und Hiob* (Leipzig 1918) 194; P. SZCZYGIEL, *Das Buch Job, übersetzt und erklärt* (HSAT 5; Bonn 1931) 53; BLOMMERDE, *Northwest*, 42.

(15,15; 25,5) a clear deficiency is stated: the heavens or stars are not as pure as he wishes them to be, or they did not gain merit in his eyes.

— Derive the meaning of תהלה from the context

Ralbag — “shine” from I הלה (Job 29,3) assuming that ל extends to שׁי;

Rashbam, Berechiah ben Natronai — leave תהלה unexplained³⁹;

Judeo-Persian MS — “ingratitude”. However, the marginal addition reads “curse” instead⁴⁰;

Cox — “frailty”⁴¹;

Delitzsch — “imperfection”⁴²;

Chaham — “disgrace, reproach” (גנאי, דפי)⁴³;

Tur-Sinai — “threat, reproof” (as the Arabic *tahwil*), a derivative of the unattested root הול, and perhaps originally pronounced תהלה⁴⁴;

Grabbe — Grabbe’s analysis of the different options leads him to the conclusion that *hll* is the only well attested word with a meaning “be foolish.” Unfortunately, it is not clear whether תהלה can be derived from *hll*. If a credible rationale for the derivation תהלה from *hll* can be found, that would be the best option and in line with the versions and traditional notions. The second option is to derive תהלה from the Arabic *wahila*⁴⁵.

Grabbe’s conclusion is based on the assumption that the required meaning for תהלה is “be foolish”. However, this assumption is logically questionable and certainly unsupported by the majority of the versions⁴⁶. Many commentators opted to translate תהלה by “folly, error,” perhaps believing that such a sense would provide some explanation for the injustice on earth. For instance, Smith argues that injustice on earth can in part be explained by the fact that some of

³⁹ JAPHET, *Rashbam*, 354.

⁴⁰ H.H. PAPER, “A Judeo-Persian Book of Job”, *Proceedings of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities*, Vol. V (1971-1976) (Jerusalem 1976) 315.

⁴¹ S. COX, *A Commentary on the Book of Job* (London 1894) 78.

⁴² F. DELITZSCH, *Biblical Commentary on the Book of Job* (Edinburgh 1881) I, 94.

⁴³ CHAHAM, א״ב, 35.

⁴⁴ TUR-SINAI, *Job*, 85.

⁴⁵ GRABBE, *Comparative*, 43.

⁴⁶ Symmachus is the only one that has “folly” for תהלה.

God's angels err or do not carry out their responsibilities as God might wish. These malfunctions as well as human wickedness towards his fellow man cause the justice system between mankind and God to be sometimes out of symmetrical order (4,18) ⁴⁷.

This description presents Job as naively primitive. It shifts much of the evil and misfortune in the world from God to angels and men; a theology that would be at odds with the normative thinking at any period suggested for the formation of the book.

It would be also very difficult within the confines of monotheism to attribute folly (i.e., irrational behavior) to angels — entities whose function is completely prescribed by God. Similarly, attributing to angels the possibility of erring would stretch the anthropomorphic metaphor well beyond the common understanding of angels. Moreover, accepting the possibility that angels could err would imply that prophets could inaccurately transmit God's message, and consequently the theological foundation of the entire Bible would be undermined. It is doubtful that the author would not have realized the danger in such a position. Finally, assigning to תהלה the meaning "foolish, err" leads to the doctrine of universal sinfulness, which contradicts the doctrine of retribution in Eliphaz's first speech.

Neither "folly" nor "error" is an acceptable option for תהלה. Clearly, the meaning of 4,18 is still unsettled.

III. Problems of Interpretation

The assumption that the terms עבדיו and מלאכיו refer to supernatural entities, coupled with the perception that these entities could engage in improper behavior, leads to problematic theological consequences. For instance, Gibson's frustration with 4,18 can be felt from his words: "We do not know the background, mythological no doubt, to these disturbing verses, unless it be something to do with fallen angels (cp. Gen. 6.1-2). But the manner in which Eliphaz employs them is so reckless as to be not worthy of Job himself". In Gibson's view the verses imply "a capricious deity, who sows discord in the heavenly places and permits ignorance on earth" ⁴⁸.

⁴⁷ G.V. SMITH, "Job IV 12-21: is it Eliphaz's vision?", *VT* 40 (1990) 463.

⁴⁸ GIBSON, "Eliphaz", 267.

Clearly, any suggestion that angels could err, or act foolishly, lewdly, and wickedly would undermine all the cases in which angels are mentioned in the Bible as messengers of God ⁴⁹. How can they be trusted if God does not trust them, noting that they can err, or even engage in folly? How can the words of the prophets be trusted if the words of the angels cannot be trusted? The learned author of the book would not have put such suggestions into a prophetic vision which he wanted to be trusted. Thus it is impossible that the statement in 4,18 was said by the “voice” that Eliphaz hears. Indeed, were it the case that the voice states 4,18, then it would open whatever it says to doubt, including the statement in 4,18, turning the entire vision into a paradoxical message. The author could not have presented the philosophical character “Eliphaz” as one that makes contradictory statements.

While Eliphaz would have reported 4,18 as part of the vision, he would have never made a statement of this kind by himself. Angels were often the bearers of God’s word, their faithfulness in execution of this function is never questioned in the Bible, and it is axiomatic that they can and must be trusted ⁵⁰. Barton’s suggestion that in Gen 6,2 and 1 Kgs 22,21-23 we have a case of “bad” angels is without merit ⁵¹. In neither of the cases cited is the word **מלאך** or **מלאכים** mentioned. In either of the cases the text can be well explained without resorting to the concept “angel”. In 6,2 the **בני־האלהים** could be “the sons of the leaders” (see Targum Onkelos), and in 1 Kgs 22,21-23 there is a play on the word **רוח** “spirit (of the dead?)” and the phrase **רוח שקר** (“spirit of falseness”) in a metaphor based on the royal court. Use of a similar form, **רוח רעה** (“spirit of discord”), in Judg 9,23 clearly shows that **רוח** has nothing to do with angels. Indeed, since this court consists of the celestial bodies (**צבא השמים**) it cannot refer to angels. More-

⁴⁹ Angels are mentioned for instance in the Tanach in Gen 16,7-11; 18,1-16; 28,10-12; Exod 3,2; 23,20-21; 2 Sam 24,16-17; 1 Kgs 19,5-8; Zec 1,9,14; 2,2; 2,7-9; 4,1; Pss 34,8; 91,11-12; 103,20; Dan 6,19-22; 8,16; 9,21; 10,13; 12,1; etc. Copleston observes that Philo of Alexandria identified the angel with the Logos, as the immaterial voice of God. Thus, the angel is God’s instrument, not God himself. Cf. F.C. COPLESTON, *A History of Philosophy* (New York 2003) I, 460.

⁵⁰ BARTON, *Commentary*, 81.

⁵¹ GIBSON, “Eliphaz”, 262. Gibson dubs “Eliphaz a Hebrew philosopher”, a **חכם** or “wise man”. He describes him as a “complicated, and cultured, opinionated and skeptical old scholar”.

over, in 1 Kgs 22,21-23 the “spirit” executes a desired function — it is neither good nor bad. Finally, in Ps 82,1 and especially Ps 82,6-7 seemingly “gods” and “sons of the Most High” are mentioned, with whom God might be perceived finding fault. Clearly, Ps 82,1 is intended to suggest that God is the judge of judges and that he is in the company of the most powerful (עֲדַת אֱלֹהִים). The text of Ps 82,2-7 refers only to humans, and in this sense should אֱלֹהִים (“judge, judges”) and בְּנֵי עֲלִיּוֹן (“descendants of the elite”) be understood.

Only in the book of Enoch (200-170 BCE) are angels divided into good and bad, and the bad angels play a role in the corruption of the world. Even if a statement such as 4,18 floated in the popular lore at the time the Book of Job was written, Eliphaz would have been careful not to use it for constructing his main argument in this particular setting. It is patently clear that the terms עֲבָדָיו and מַלְאָכָיו cannot refer to supernatural entities.

IV. Proposed Solution

Eliphaz’s rephrase of 4,18 in 15,15, and Bildad’s rephrase in 25,5 in a non-visionary context point to the true understanding of the statement in 4,18. In 15,15 Eliphaz says:

He puts no trust in His holy ones; בְּקִדְשׁוֹ לֹא יִאֱמִין
The heavens are not guiltless in His sight וְשָׁמַיִם לֹא-זָכוּ בְּעֵינָיו

This verse can be understood as referring to the heavenly bodies (sun, moon, and stars) set apart (i.e., “holy” = קִדְשׁוֹ) at the time of creation for a stated purpose (Gen 1,14-18) of providing a fixed service⁵². The heavens (שָׁמַיִם), where meteorological phenomena originate, have also been set for their function at creation (Gen 1,6-8), albeit their function is of a sporadic nature. This understanding per-

⁵² SMITH, “Job”, 455-456. Smith notes that commentators “struggle to find a reason why Eliphaz thought Job might call on the holy ones [5,1], but these interpretations are not entirely satisfactory”. DILLMANN, *Hiob*, 38, notes that “der Ausdruck קִדְשׁוֹ (5,1. 15,15) auch von den Engeln nur relativ zu verstehen ist”. The interpretation of קִדְשׁוֹ that is being suggested here provides also a natural explanation for 5,1 and various verses in the Psalms (cf. Ps 89,6 and Ps 19,2). Eliphaz tells Job that directing his anger to the sun (3,4), moon (3,6), and stars (3,9) can have no effect.

fectly fits the two terms **עבדיו** and **מלאכיו** in 4,18. The first colon (4,18a) refers to the fixed celestial bodies in the firmament; those are His “servants” (**עבדיו**), doing their fixed and permanent assignments. Some of these functions are described in Pss 19,6-7, 74,16-17, 103,23, 104,4, etc. The second colon (4,18b) refers to God’s agents doing sporadic tasks; those are His “messengers” (**מלאכיו**)⁵³. Some of their functions are described in Pss 103,20, 104,4, 135,7; 147,15-18; 148,8, etc.

This perception of the two terms **עבדיו** and **מלאכיו** finds also strong support in the words of Bildad (25,5):

Even the moon is not bright, הן עדי־רחק ולא יאהיל
And the stars are not pure in His sight וכוכבים לא־זכו בְּעֵינָיו

which introduce the celestial bodies moon and stars, in a *qal wahomer* structure that is similar to that in 4,19-19, and a text that partially repeats the words in 15,15b. In Tur-Sinai’s opinion, “According to the parallel passages, the reference is not only to angels and divine beings proper, but also to the sun, the moon and stars, which too are felt to be godly beings, God’s servants and messengers”⁵⁴.

This paper argues that Tur-Sinai’s partial admission is insufficient. Indeed, if it assumed that in the parallel passages parallelism extends to the corresponding cola (i.e., 4,18a || 15,15a || 25,5a and 4,18b || 15,15b || 25,5b) then **עבדיו** || **קדשו** (“holy”) || **ירח** (“moon”) and **מלאכיו** || **שמים** (“heavens”) || **כוכבים** (“stars”). The only way to make these parallelisms logically coherent is by accepting that in all these similar cases (4,18; 15,5; 25,5) the reference is to celestial bodies and phenomena, not angels or supernatural entities. Indeed, Berechiah ben Natronai (Ha-nakdan) (12th–13th CE) observed: “I find it most probable that the expression “his servants” is used here [4,18] as in the last speech of Bildad the Shuhite (xxv. 5)”⁵⁵.

It should not come as a surprise that God was perceived as not being always pleased with His creation. As beautiful, wise, and

⁵³ This distinction between “servants” and “messengers” explains the strange addition of **בתוכם** in 1,6. Since the **אלהים בני** were servants and **שטן** was a messenger, he should not have appeared among those not of his kind.

⁵⁴ TUR-SINAI, *Job*, 85.

⁵⁵ S.A. HIRSCH (trans.), *A Commentary on the Book of Job by Berechiah ben Natronai* (London 1905) 29.

amazing as God's creation is to man, it was also seen as having built-in freedoms ("free will") and perhaps intentional imperfections ("evil inclinations": Gen 8,21). The initial creation was thus the main stage in a creation process which is still in progress and to which man could also contribute. This has been intimated in the seemingly superfluous word **לַעֲשׂוֹת** in Gen 2,3, which in Jewish tradition indicated the continuous need for **תִּיקּוֹן עוֹלָם** ("repair of the world"). For instance one finds in the Midrash: "Everything that was created in the six days of creation needs some additional 'fixing'. For instance, mustard needs sweetness added to it, lupines need sweetness added to them, wheat needs to be grinded, and even man needs repair (circumcision)"⁵⁶. From this perspective the inanimate celestial bodies and natural phenomena could be subject to God's displeasure because of various anomalies, which the ancients may have observed. Because of the "personification" of the celestial entities and phenomena, the ancients viewed these anomalies as indiscretions.

This understanding of the two terms **מַלְאָכָיו** and **עֲבָדָיו** is at the basis of the *qal wahomer* in vv. 18-19. If God finds displeasure with the functioning of inanimate celestial bodies and natural phenomena, so much more so is this the case with human beings, which are of lowly make up (**בַּעֲפָר יִסֹּדֵם**) and precarious existence (**יִדְכָּאוּם לִפְנֵי־עֵשׂ**). The comparison in the *qal wahomer* is between the inanimate but permanent (sun, moon, stars, meteorological phenomena) and the animate but impermanent (humans).

Since the two terms **מַלְאָכָיו** and **עֲבָדָיו** cannot refer to angels, or some supernatural entities, attribution of anthropomorphic misbehavior to them, even on a metaphoric level, would be inappropriate. It is still possible to say that God has no confidence in his "servants" the sun, moon, and stars, if this statement refers to their orbits and brightness. It is, however, impossible to attribute "folly" or "error" to meteorological phenomena. Thus, **תַּהֲלָה** has to have a meaning that is appropriate for natural phenomena and human behavior. Such a concept is "speed" of the process, or "magnitude" of the event⁵⁷.

⁵⁶ *Genesis Rabba* 11,7.

⁵⁷ GIBSON, "Eliphaz", 266, n. 2. Apparently Gibson sensed the theological difficulties of assigning "madness" to angels, and consequently rendered **תַּהֲלָה** "rashness," a nuance of speed.

It is possible to obtain a meaning that describes the speed of a process, or magnitude of an event, if instead of *תהלה* the text is assumed to have been *תלה*, a simple case of scribal error of metathesis⁵⁸. The word *תלה*, kindred to its homophone *תלא*, is derived from the root *לה*, “languish, faint,” and is attested in Gen 47,13 in the imperfect, feminine singular (apocope), *תלה*⁵⁹. *תלה* occurs in 4,2 and *תלא* in 4,5; so it is possible that the homophone *תלה* was written because of the *ה/א* confusion. This confusion is attested in the Tanach and Qumran scrolls⁶⁰. In Jerusalem Aramaic, the corresponding roots *לה* and *להא* mean “to be tired” (JASTROW, 693b)⁶¹. Though *תלה* is a *hapax legomenon* its meaning cannot be doubted, because of its Aramaic cognates, occurrence in Ben Sira, and the seeming similarity between *לה* and *תלה*. Indeed, it is possible that a scribe coming across the word *תלה* deemed it an error, because he could not recall the existence of the rare root *לה* in the Bible, and deliberately changed it to the more familiar *תהלה*. Delitzsch seems to have rightly conjectured: “The form points to a *Lamedh-He* verb”⁶².

⁵⁸ GRABBE, *Comparative*, 42. Grabbe writes: “The form [תהלה] could easily come from a root *hly. Finding such a root, though, is rather difficult. ... One suspects a case of metathesis. This suspicion becomes further confirmed when a fairly thorough check fails to turn up any other example of a root *hly in Semitic”. The suggested approach circumvents these difficulties.

⁵⁹ The root *lhh* is mentioned in L. KOEHLER – W. BAUMGARTNER (eds.), *A Bilingual Dictionary of the Hebrew and Aramaic Old Testament* (Leiden 1998) 474, col. B. KB adds the form *hitpalp* (תלהל) in Ben Sira. In both occurrences of *תלהל* in Ben Sira (Sir 35,14 and 15) it is the opposite of *דורש*, which reflects active pursuance. Thus, “languish, faint” for *לה* would also well fit the texts in Ben Sira. Cf. A.Sh. ARTOM, *בן־סירא* (Tel Aviv 1967) 117–118.

⁶⁰ This confusion is attested, for instance, in Job 8,21 *ימלא* for *ימלה*; *פא* and *פא* in Job 38,11; *נאח* (Ez 30,24) but *נחא* (Job 6,5); Qoh 8,1 *ישנא* for *ישנה*; 2 Kgs 25,29; Lam 4,1; Ruth 1,20 *מרא* for *מרה*; 1 Kgs 22,25 and 2 Kgs 7,12 *להחבה* but *להחבא* in 2 Chr 18,24; Isa 44,8 *תרהו* for *תראו*; Jer 50,29 *לא* (Ketib) but *לה* (Qere); Ez 14,4 *בה* (K) but *בא* (Q); 2 Chr 20,35 *הדרש* for *הדרש*; Ez 14,3 *הדרש* for *הדרש*; Jer 25,3 *אשכים* for *אשכים*; Gen 41,43 *אברך* for *הברך*; Ps 76,6 *אשתוללו* for *השתוללו*; Isa 63,3 *אגאלתי* for *הגאלתי*; etc.

⁶¹ Targum (Lagarde’s edition) renders in Isa 65,23 *יגעו* (“they will tire”) by *ילהו*, and in Isa 42,4 *יכהה* (“he will dim, faint”) by *ילהי*. Jerusalem Targum has *להי* in Deut 25,18 for *עף* (“tired”). See also Targum (Lagarde’s edition) on Mal 2,17.

⁶² DELITZSCH, *Biblical*, 94.

Taking תהלה as having the meaning “weakness” provides a sense that eminently fits a natural event and human behavior. It is possible that God considers some natural events lacking sufficient force or quickness of movement. From this perspective, the neutral sense of “he notes” would be most appropriate for שׂי in 4,18b. Indeed, Grabbe suggested such an interpretation without any elucidation⁶³. However, some support for this sense of שׂי can be garnered from משי in 4,20b, where the meaning “notice” would aptly fit⁶⁴. Also, in Jerusalem Aramaic the corresponding סם could mean “to mark, name, to distinguish” (JASTROW, 965a), a sense that is very close to “note”. One finds it in the Jerusalem Talmud use of ס׳ימנ in the sense of “they noted” (y. *Berachot* 5,9; y. *Megilla* 1,71; y. *D’mai* 5,24; y. *Shabbath* 6,8). The sense “he notes” would also well fit שׂי in 1 Sam 22,15, which is often used in support of the generally accepted meaning “imputes, attributes”.

If the preceding understandings of the critical terms in v. 4,18 are accepted, then this verse can be rendered: “Behold, in His servants He does not trust, and in His emissaries He notes weakness”. Taking this interpretation as the *minori* part of the *qal wahomer* results in a conclusion that it is reasonable for God not to trust humans and note weaknesses in them. Such an attitude would be justified even with respect to Job, whom Eliphaz apparently considered to be righteous (4,6). Fullerton correctly explains Eliphaz’s attitude saying that Eliphaz does not accuse Job of any specific sins which might account for his suffering. Eliphaz refers only to “the general sinfulness of man which is inherent in man’s creatureliness”⁶⁵. Job must expect to suffer, not because he sinned but because he was a man, and no man can be clean in the eyes of his creator. From this conclusion would also follow the possibility that God tests the righteous (5,17) so that they could manifest being worthy of his trust, or for the sake of guiding them to this status (5,18).

The comparison in the *qal wahomer* is only an example of the more fundamental comparison between God’s creation and human deeds encapsulated in the rhetorical questions in 4,17:

⁶³ GRABBE, *Comparative*, 41.

⁶⁴ See CLINES, *Job*, 113-114, for some of the opinions regarding משי.

⁶⁵ FULLERTON, “Entendre”, 328.

Can a mortal be more right than God?

Can a man be more faultless than his Maker?

הֲאִנִּישׁ מֵאֱלֹהִים יִצְדֵּק
אִם מֵעֹשֶׂהוּ יִטְהַר-נָבֶר

Commentators generally felt that this verse cannot mean: “Can man be more righteous than God?” Any man sound of mind would agree that man cannot be more righteous than God — there is no need to state the obvious. Moreover, such understanding would not agree with 5,18-27 and does not fit Job’s case, since he never claims to be more righteous than God. What then could the vision be conveying?

The keyword in 4,17 is עָשָׂה (“to make”), which clearly stands out when this verse is compared to 15,14 and 25,4. It refers to God as man’s creator, and thus must be alluding to creation and its imperfection⁶⁶. This verse, without having the formal rhetoric structure, is also a *qal wahomer*, albeit an implied one. The questions must consequently be understood in the following way: If there are imperfections in God’s creation, then there obviously must be imperfections in a mortal’s deeds, since he cannot be more perfect than his creator (מֵעֹשֶׂהוּ)⁶⁷.

Eliphaz’s vision, which in a dramatic manner presents his fundamental theological perspective, is certainly true within the biblical framework and appropriate for the situational context⁶⁸. It is, however, woefully unbalanced. It leaves out the other side of the coin: the enormous perfection that does exist in God’s creation and the high levels of personal perfection that are attainable by mortals.

⁶⁶ BEUKEN, “Eliphaz”, 302. Beuken also understands the passage 4,17-18 from a creational perspective, rather than forensic or moralistic point of view. However, he takes Eliphaz’s message to be that God does not even “encounter a lack of fidelity and wisdom among his ‘servants/messengers,’ but that the said moral characteristics do not count for him”. Beuken does not provide any textual support for his opinion. Gibson (“Eliphaz”, 265) also felt that Eliphaz “adds some thoughts on God which he himself obviously considers to be so daring that he has to justify them by claiming a special revelation”. Unfortunately, he does not specify what these thoughts might be.

⁶⁷ TUR-SINAI, *Job*, 84. Tur-Sinai notes that rendering 4,17a “Is man more just than God?” or “Does man act justly toward God?” makes no sense, since it does not matter to the speaker “whether or not man acts justly towards God or could be juster than he”. He translates: “Can man have justice from God? Will man be found pure by his maker?” This forensic tenor does not agree with the following *qal wahomer*.

⁶⁸ See for instance 1 Kgs 8,46; Pss 130,3; 143,3; Prov 20,9; Qoh 7,20; etc.

Eliphaz tries in vv. 5,9-10 to correct this impression. The balance is, however, set right only with God's speeches from the whirlwind.

V. The Weakness of His Messengers

Job 4,18 has been considered by many commentators as part of a mysterious nocturnal dream-vision experienced by Eliphaz⁶⁹. Smith observes: "Since this vision is repeated three times and treats the central issue of the book, a person's righteousness before God, it must have an important role in the overall development of the theological argument of the book"⁷⁰. The content of the vision, however, seems to champion ideas "that were normative in Mesopotamian theology since the beginning of the second millennium". It is doubtful that the author wanted to rehash these old notions⁷¹. Whether the night vision described by Eliphaz was an actual heavenly communication, or believed to be such by Eliphaz, it is clear that he wanted the rhetorical questions in 4,17 to have some unassailable imprimatur and to serve as the linchpin of his argument⁷². Consequently, whether 4,18-19 is or is not part of the vision, 4,18 must be considered subsidiary to the theological frame set by 4,17.

⁶⁹ TUR-SINAI, *Job*, 88-91; GINSBERG, "Job the patient and Job the impatient", *Congress Volume. Rome 1968* (ed. J.A. EMERTON) (SVT 17; Leiden 1969) 98-107, and SMITH, "Job", 454-463, think Eliphaz quotes Job's vision. For instance, TUR-SINAI, *Job*, 88-89, argues: "Is it not, moreover, undeniable that the ideas expressed in the dream story are alien and even contrary to Eliphaz's train of thought?" Ginsberg is convinced that 4,12-20 originally stood at the end of chapter three. SMITH, "Job", 454, argues: "if the central thesis of the vision is that no person can be just before God (iv 17), why do the friends consistently maintain the theological view that the righteous never perish (iv 7), that God judges the sinner and blesses the righteous (v 17, viii 3-6, 20, xi 13-20, xxii 21-9)?" For a more recent rebuttal of Tur-Sinai's arguments see WEISS, "Metaphor", 204-206, n. 59 (□).

⁷⁰ SMITH, "Job", 453. Eliphaz usually relies on Wisdom tradition and his own experience.

⁷¹ G.L. MATTINGLY, "The Pious Sufferer: Mesopotamia's Traditional Theodicy and Job's Counselors", *The Bible in the Light of Cuneiform Literature* (eds. W.W. HALLO et al.) (Scripture in Context III. Ancient Near Eastern Texts and Studies 8; Lewiston, NY 1990) 333.

⁷² SMITH, "Job", 454. The fact that Bildad in 25,4-6 paraphrases 4,17-20, which are usually considered part of the vision, casts considerable doubt on the authenticity of Eliphaz's implied claim. It is possible that Bildad attempts to politely correct Eliphaz's theologically problematic exaggeration.

Eliphaz alludes in 4,17 to the more fundamental thesis, which can be formulated thus: If there are imperfections in God's creation, then there must be imperfections in a mortal's deeds. This appears to be Eliphaz's main thesis and failing. The *qal wahomer* in 4,18-19 is an illustration of Eliphaz's thesis and 4,20-21 of his doctrinal failing. If God finds faults with inanimate natural phenomena, then there must be faults also with human beings. Eliphaz goes, however, a step further. He reasons: If there are faults with human beings, then it makes sense that their lot is misery (4,20-21) ⁷³. In his view, Job "was a sinner as all men are sinners. Sin is inherent in mankind. Sin and therefore suffering are racial concomitants" ⁷⁴. Thus, what Job considers an imperfection Eliphaz views as a proper state of being. Eliphaz failed because of a loss of sense of proportion. Andersen aptly notes "Eliphaz is following a path of truth that will lead him into a great error" ⁷⁵.

Nowhere in the Tanach is distrust and misbehavior associated with heavenly beings or angels ⁷⁶. There is no reason for the author of the Book of Job to break with this tradition and introduce a notion undermining the theological foundation of the Tanach. The validity of the *qal wahomer* in 4,18-19 is maintained when the terms *עבדיו* and *מלאכיו* are understood as referring to the set motions of the sun, moon, and stars as well as to the sporadic meteorological events, respectively.

This understanding of the terms *עבדיו* and *מלאכיו* allows also for a reasonable resolution of the seeming contradiction between the doctrine of retribution and the doctrine of universal sinfulness. In 4,18 God's displeasure can only relate to the "manner" in which these inanimate bodies and phenomena execute their prescribed task. The *qal wahomer* in 4,18-19 implies that Eliphaz refers in 4,19 to God's possible displeasure with the "manner" in which righteous "acts" are executed by humans. It is possible to be a righteous person by performing only righteous acts. However, it is also possible simultaneously to be deficient in the "manner" of performing the righteous

⁷³ R. GORDIS, *The Book of Job* (New York 1978) 518-519, n. 6. Eliphaz suggests that all people are imperfect sinful creatures, and no one can be just before God; therefore everyone can expect to suffer.

⁷⁴ FULLERTON, "Entendre", 330.

⁷⁵ ANDERSEN, *Job*, 114.

⁷⁶ The obscure Gen 6,4 does not necessarily refer to heavenly beings.

“acts”. With this distinction in mind, the two doctrines can coexist. Moreover, such an understanding provides the same referents set for the three cases of *qal wahomer* in 4,18-19; 15,15-16; and 25,5-6. It also firmly establishes the notion that Eliphaz “does not relate to one or other moral foundation”⁷⁷.

It is from this perspective that the difficulty with the *hapax legomenon* תַּדַּלֵּה can be resolved. The proposed reading:

If he cannot trust His servants, בַּעֲבָדָיו לֹא יֵאֱמִין
And notices weakness in His messengers, וּבַמַּלְאָכָיו יִשְׁמַח תַּלְהָה

results in a text that does not involve any super-natural beings, does not resort to rare non-Hebrew words, does not involve addition of words, and is not theologically controversial. The verse is part of a *qal wahomer* intended to reinforce Eliphaz’s message that Job has to look within for the cause of his misfortunes, because all people are imperfect sinful creatures, and no one can be just before God.

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SUMMARY

This paper argues that the terms עֲבָדָיו and מַלְאָכָיו in Job 4,18 should be understood as referring to the set motions of the sun, moon, and stars as well as to sporadic meteorological events, respectively. Such understanding does not dilute the validity and force of the *qal wahomer* in 4,18-19. The comparison is between the inanimate but permanent (sun, moon, stars, meteorological phenomena) and the animate but impermanent (humans). The difficult תַּדַּלֵּה is assumed to have been originally תַּלְהָה from תַּלְהָה, “languish, faint”. Taking תַּדַּלֵּה as having the meaning “weakness” provides a sense that eminently fits a natural event.

⁷⁷ BEUKEN, “Eliphaz”, 301.

Die Amosschrift als juda-exilische israelitische Komposition

Kürzlich hat U. Rütterswörden sich noch einmal deutlich für Am 9,(7.)8-15 als einen sekundären nachexilischen Abschluß der Amosschrift ausgesprochen¹. In der Ringstruktur von Am 8,11-12/ 9,13-15; 8,13-14/ 9,11-12; 9,1-4/ 9,8-10 am Ende des Amostextes erkennt er einen redaktionell anknüpfenden literarischen Zug. Demnach beschloss die Doxologie Am 9,5-6 eine ältere Fassung der Unheilsprophetie, während Am 9,(7.)8-15 in einem “klaren inhaltlichen Gegensatz”² dazu einen hoffnungsvollen Ausblick formuliert. Gehäufte Verweise auf den Charakter eines Gotteswortes sollen die Ergänzungen legitimieren. Während Am 9,7 “eher isoliert”³ dastehe, sei Am 9,8.11-15 von vielen Schriftbezügen geprägt, und zeige darin eine späte schriftstellerische Tätigkeit.

Wie Rütterswörden selbst darlegt, hat die Darstellung der letzten Verse der Amosschrift als sekundärer Abschluss eine lange und breit akzeptierte Tradition. Dennoch sind an diese Beurteilung zwei grundsätzliche Fragen zu stellen, die zu einer früheren Datierung insbesondere des Amoschlusses führen können.

I. Das Exil

“Mit der Doxologie Am 9,5-6 schließt eine exilische Fassung des Amosbuches”⁴. Es ist für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft selbstverständlich, die Bewertung “exilisch” mit dem babylonischen Exil Juda-“Israels” zu verbinden. Diese Einschätzung bedarf keiner weiteren Begründung — wie ich meine zu Unrecht. Prinzipiell müssen die ältesten Amosworte, wenn nur irgendetwas dem historischen Amos im 8. Jh. v. Chr. zuzuschreiben ist, vor dem ba-

¹ U. RÜTERSWÖRDEN, “‘Rosen und Lavendel statt Blut und Eisen’. Zum Abschluss des Amosbuches”, *Geschichte Israels und deuteronomisches Geschichtsdenken*. Festschrift W. Thiel (Hrsg. P. MOMMER – A. SCHERER) (AOAT 380; Münster 2010) 211-221.

² RÜTERSWÖRDEN, “Rosen”, 212.

³ RÜTERSWÖRDEN, “Rosen”, 216.

⁴ RÜTERSWÖRDEN, “Rosen”, 215.

bylonischen Exil den Untergang Israels und eine Weitergabe der Tradition in Juda erlebt haben. In Juda muss die Überlieferung zwischen 720-586 v.Chr. eine stabile Form gefunden haben; dies unterstellt auch Rütterswörden.

Aus historischer Sicht sprechen einige allgemeine Argumente für diese Überlegung. Bis 720 v.Chr. zeigte sich Israel kulturell und politisch Juda stark überlegen. Nach der assyrischen Eroberung Israels nahm Juda unter Hiskia israelitische Einflüsse auf. Deren Umfang und Stärke sind freilich noch umstritten⁵. Der Gedanke, die Amosschrift sei ein judäisches Werk, kann wohl auf der in Am 1,1 angezeigten judäischen Abkunft des Propheten aufbauen. Er kommt jedoch in Schwierigkeiten, wenn er die judäischen Beweggründe entfalten wollte, die das literarische Projekt vorantrieben. Klarer sprechen redaktionsgeschichtliche Erkenntnisse für eine israelitische Herkunft unserer Amostradition. So hat J. Jeremias gezeigt, dass die von Am 1,1 vgl. Hos 1,1 älter datierten Amosworte erst im Gefolge der jüngeren Hoseaworte verschriftet wurden⁶. Dabei durchdrang hoseanische Theologie stärker die Amosschrift als umgekehrt. Da Hoseaworte ihren Sitz im Leben allein in Israel hatten, müssen sie durch israelitische Tradenten auf der Flucht vor den Assyriern nach Juda gebracht worden sein. Dort wurden sie von ihnen oder unter ihrem Einfluss mit der amosischen Überlieferung verbunden. So bedarf es grundsätzlich einer Prüfung, ob "exilische" Aussagen eher die ("juda-exilische") Situation israelitischer Flüchtlinge in Juda nach 720 v. Chr. oder die ("babylon-exilische") Situation Juda-"Israels" nach 586 v.Chr. beschreiben.

II. Gerichtsprophetie

Der Amoschluß wird als sekundärer Bestandteil verstanden, weil eine theologische Diskrepanz zwischen der Unheilsprophetie des Amos und der hoffnungsvollen Schlußaussage gesehen wird. Mit diesem Urteil wird jedoch noch nicht beschrieben, welche literarische Funktion diese Wendung erfüllt. Um den Abschluß der

⁵ Dazu vgl. W. SCHÜTTE, "Wie wurde Juda israelitisiert?", *ZAW* 124 (2012) 52-72.

⁶ Vgl. J. JEREMIAS, "Die Anfänge des Dodekapropheton: Hosea und Amos", *Hosea und Amos* (FAT 13; Tübingen 1996) 34-54.

amosischen Unheilsprophetie mit einer Schlußhoffnung zu erklären, habe ich in der Literatur drei anregende Ansätze gefunden.

G. Steins setzt in einem 2010 erschienen Buch dezidiert bei der kanonischen Fassung des Amostextes an. An ihr arbeitet er die Rolle des Propheten und die Stellung des Gottesvolkes zur Prophetie als zentrales Anliegen heraus. Für Steins wird Am 9,7 in zweifacher Weise zum Schlüsselvers des Amoschlusses. Mit Verweis auf A. Neher stellt Steins zunächst die gängige Übersetzung infrage⁷. Demnach sei der Nominalsatz *הלוֹא כבְּנֵי כְּשִׁיִּים אַתֶּם לִי בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל נִאֻם יְהוָה* mit “Gehört ihr, Söhne Israels, nicht [wenigsten] ebenso mir an wie die Söhne der Äthiopier?”⁸ zu übersetzen. Zu recht verweist Steins mit Neher darauf, dass *אַתֶּם לִי* grammatisch eher eine Zugehörigkeit zu JHWH formuliert. Für ein Israels Vorrang abwertendes “Seid ihr für mich nicht wie die Kuschiter, ihr Israeliten?” (Zürcher Bibel 2007) sei eher *אַתֶּם לִפְנֵי* zu erwarten⁹. Entsprechend erinnere der Exodusbezug in Am 9,7b an “die bleibende und unverlierbare Zugehörigkeit Israels zu Gott” als Volk Gottes¹⁰. Das in der Israelstrophe Am 2,6-16 angekündigte Gericht bleibe daher nicht das letzte Wort Gottes, sondern fände in Am 9,7-15 eine hoffnungsvolle Entgegnung, die kanonisch gut vernetzt sei¹¹.

⁷ G. STEINS, *Gericht und Vergebung. Re-Visionen zum Amosbuch* (SBS 221; Stuttgart 2010) 111-115, und A. NEHER, *Amos. Contribution à l'étude du prophétisme* (Paris 1950) 140-142, mit Rekurs auf zwei ältere jüdische Vorschläge.

⁸ M. HIRSCH, *Die Haftoroth* (Frankfurt/M. 1896) 192, und M. HIRSCH, *Die zwölf Propheten* (Frankfurt/M. 1900) 199; vgl. S.R. HIRSCH, *Pentateuch*. Viertes Teil: Numeri (Frankfurt/M. 1911) 148. Vgl. auch W. VOGELS, “Invitation à revenir à l’alliance et universalisme en Amos IX 7”, *VT* 22 (1972) 223-239.

⁹ HIRSCH, *Propheten* 199, verneint entschieden einen Verlust der Sonderstellung Israels mit Verweis auf Am 3,2. Zur Paraphrase des Targum (“Children of Israel, are you not regarded as beloved children before me?”) vgl. R.P. GORDON – K.J. CATHCART (Hrsg.), *The Targum of the Minor Prophets* (The Aramaic Bible 14; Edinburgh 1989) 95 Anm. 24. Die jüdischen Ausleger des Mittelalters betonten die Schuld Israels, die das Recht auf den Landbesitz verwirkte (Eliezer de Beaugency, vgl. Raschi), und zugleich die besondere Bindung Israels an seinen Gott (R. David Qimhi: “meine Sklaven”, A. ibn Ezra: “ihr seid Kinder des einzigen Vaters”), vgl. G. RUIZ GONZALEZ, *Comentarios hebreos medievales al libro de Amos* (Madrid 1987) 281-288.

¹⁰ STEINS, *Gericht*, 115.

¹¹ Vgl. STEINS, *Gericht*, 117-130.

In verschiedenen Aufsätzen äußert sich R.G. Kratz zu dem Problem der unbedingten Unheilsprophetie in den Prophetenbüchern ¹². Anknüpfend an K.-F. Pohlmann fragt er nach dem Sinn einer Verneinung Israels durch seinen Gott und seine Propheten ¹³. Nach Kratz waren es einschneidende Katastrophen in der Geschichte des Gottesvolkes, die zu einem beispiellosen Neudenken der Gottesbeziehung führten. Nicht nur das Krisenjahr 586 v.Chr., wie Pohlmann vorschlug, sondern bereits die Krisenjahre (für Israel) 720 und (für Juda) 701 v.Chr. könnten Auslöser gewesen sein, eine Theologie zu entwickeln, die an ihrem Gott festhielt, auch wenn alles, für das ein Gott seinem Volk Garant sein könnte, verloren ginge. Ältere Prophetenworte in der Art altorientalischer Prophetie seien grundlegend transformiert und weiterentwickelt worden. Daraus entstand "eine Sorte Literatur für geschlossene Zirkel, literarisch und theologisch geschulte Kreise, die ihre angestammten Denkmuster, auch die Denkmuster des namengebenden Propheten, preisgaben, um unter allen Umständen an ihrem Gott JHWH festzuhalten" ¹⁴. Kratz weist, anders als Steins, dem schriftprophetischen Phänomen der Unheilsprophetie einen historischen Ort zu, an dem ihre Entstehung plausibel wird (die Jahre 720/701 und 586 v.Chr.) und setzt wichtige Eckpunkte für eine redaktionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung der Schriftprophetie. Demnach könnte Am 9,7-15 die Hoffnungsperspektive sein, die adäquat über die vorausgegangene, unbedingte Unheilsprophetie hinausführte. Kratz verleiht gleichzeitig meiner Frage nach der notwendigen inhaltlichen Füllung der Definition "exilisch" zusätzlichen Nachdruck.

Eine andere Aufmerksamkeit entwickelt H. Reimer für den Amostext, wenn er seine Untersuchung unter die Leitfrage stellt "Hat der Prophet Amos ein 'totales Ende' undifferenziert für alle, für das ganze Volk, bis zum letzten Glied angekündigt?" ¹⁵. Aus Sicht der lateinamerikanischen Befreiungstheologie sei hermeneu-

¹² S. insbesondere die in R.G. KRATZ, *Prophetenstudien* (FAT 74; Tübingen 2011) vereinten Aufsätze.

¹³ K.-F. POHLMANN, "Erwägungen zu Problemen alttestamentlicher Prophetenexegese", *"Wer ist wie du, Herr, unter den Göttern"*. Festschrift O. Kaiser (Hrsg. I. KOTTSIEPER u.a.) (Göttingen 1994) 325-341.

¹⁴ R.G. KRATZ, "Die Worte des Amos von Tekoa", *Prophetenstudien* (FAT 74; Tübingen 2011) 310-343, 341-342.

¹⁵ H. REIMER, *Richtet auf das Recht*. Studien zur Botschaft des Amos (SBS 149; Stuttgart 1992) 23.

Die Verteilung der Begrifflichkeiten innerhalb der Amosschrift zeigt deutliche Schwerpunktbildungen. Ergänzt von weiteren Signalen einer Lektüre des Textes lassen sich unschwer die bekannten Stücke der Amosschrift wiedererkennen. Nach der Einleitung (Am 1,1-2) können die Völkersprüche (Am 1,3-2,16), Prophetensprüche (Am 3-4; 5-6; 8,4-14), die Visionen (Am 7,1-9; 8,1-3; 9,1-4), die Amazjaszene (Am 7,10-17) und der Amossschluß (Am 9,7-15) voneinander abgegrenzt werden. Auffällig sind die unterschiedlichen israelitischen Adressaten der Prophetensprüche Amos 3-4 und Amos 5-6, die sich nur in der Amazjaszene und dem Amossschluß mischen. Bemerkenswert ist ebenfalls, dass die Prophetensprüche Am 8,4-14 keinen der typischen Adressaten nennen, obwohl sie sich inhaltlich mit vorausgegangenen Sprüchen überschneiden. Völlig aus diesem Raster fallen die 5. Vision (Am 9,1-4) und die Doxologien (Am 4,13; 5,8-9; 9,5-6).

IV. Kompositions- und Redaktionsgeschichte

Eine ausschließlich kanonische Sicht muss sich damit auseinander setzen, dass sie eine bestimmte und späte geschichtliche Überlieferungsgestalt für ihre Interpretation auswählt. Für einen solchen rein kompositionsgeschichtlichen Ansatz führt Steins berechtigt an, dass Art und Ausmaß früherer Redaktionen nicht zu ermessen sind¹⁶. Die kanonische Interpretation läßt jedoch sehr unterschiedliche Ansichten zu, wie die Amosschrift in der Gesamtheit des Tanach zu deuten ist¹⁷. Kratz betont zu Recht, dass eine redaktionsgeschichtliche Einschätzung die kanonische Interpretation ergänzen muss, um Entwicklungen differenziert beurteilen zu können¹⁸. Die redaktionsgeschichtliche Fra-

¹⁶ STEINS, *Gericht*, 19-20. Tatsächlich stehen sich Am^{LXX} und Am^{MT} sehr nahe; vgl. E.G. DAFNI – A. SCHAT, "Amos. Einleitung", *Septuaginta Deutsch*. Erläuterungen und Kommentare, Bd. II (Hrsg. M. KARRER – W. KRAUS) (Stuttgart 2011) 2338-2343. Überraschende redaktionelle Vorstufen enthüllen etwa die drei Überlieferungen von 1-2 Könige in MT, dem antiochenischen Text (ANT) und LXX, vgl. A. SCHENKER, *Älteste Textgeschichte der Königsbücher* (OBO 199; Fribourg 2004).

¹⁷ Vgl. die verschiedenen kanonischen Bezugssetzungen bei STEINS, *Gericht*, 127-135 und RÜTERS WÖRDEN, "Rosen", 216-220.

¹⁸ Vgl. KRATZ, "Worte", 314-315.

gestellung ergänzt die synchron denkende kanonische Perspektive um eine diachron fragende Kritik. Sie kann erhellen, wie sich die Intention des Endtextes aus möglichen Vorstadien entwickelte.

Der Blick der Amosschrift auf das staatliche Ende Israels macht ihre Abfassung — trotz der Datierung von Am 1,1 und unbeschadet möglicher literarischer Vorstadien — nach 720 v.Chr. in Juda wahrscheinlich. Die feste zeitliche Untergrenze ist durch die Textfunde aus der Judäischen Wüste markiert (4QXII^{c-g}).

V. Die Völkersprüche (Am 1,3–2,16)

Die Komposition der Völkersprüche (Am 1,3–2,16) kann als Reflex auf das Katastrophenjahr 720 v.Chr. verstanden werden. Ein solches historisches Szenario für die kritische Darstellung aller Nachbarvölker Israels habe ich bereits früher plausibel gemacht ¹⁹. Ein weiteres wichtiges Argument aus der Komposition ist das Nebeneinander von Juda- und Israelspruch (Am 2,4-5.6-16). Diese "Dopplung" verweist in die Zeit der Koexistenz beider Staaten vor 720 v.Chr. zurück. Sie kennzeichnet aber auch die vor-babylon-exilische Schriftprophetie, in der "Israel" als Zielgruppe "Juda" mengenmäßig gar übertrifft ²⁰.

Der Israelspruch als Zielpunkt der Völkersprüche benennt mit den "Kindern Israels" (Am 2,11) erstmals einen direkten Adressaten für diese Komposition. Israels eigene Situation kennzeichnet er durch eine drohende gewaltige militärische Niederlage. Dieses Bild wird verschärft durch die Beobachtung, dass Israel anders als den zuvor genannten Völkern keine Zerstörung ihrer Paläste durch das Feuer der Belagerung droht. Wenn daraus geschlossen werden darf, dass Israel in jenem Moment keine eigenen Städte mehr besaß, so ist der "Sitz im Leben" des Israelspruches nach 720 v.Chr. gegeben und rührt möglicherweise an die assyrische Invasion von 701 v.Chr. in Juda. Für diese These eines auf Israels Flüchtlingsexistenz in Juda zielenden Israelspruches lassen sich verschiedene Aussagen aus Hosea, Amos und Michaschrift verknüpfen.

¹⁹ Dazu ausführlich W. SCHÜTTE, "Israels Exil in Juda und die Völkersprüche in Amos 1-2", *Bib* 92 (2011) 528-553.

²⁰ Vgl. SCHÜTTE, "Juda", 52-72.

Redaktionsgeschichtlich sind Hosea und Amos eng miteinander verbunden ²¹. Hosea und Amos prägt erzählerisch eine drohende (Am 2,13-16; 4,3; 5,7; 6,7; 8,11-13; 9,4) oder kürzlich eingetretene (Hos 11,11; 14,2-10) Katastrophe für Israel. Judäische Aussagen lassen sich in der Hoseaschrift teils als klare redaktionelle Zufügung, teils als Erweiterung der israelitischen Perspektive begreifen ²². Ebenso machen die judäische, auf (ehemals) israelitischen Gebiet ("Karmel") ausgreifende Eröffnung von Am 1,2, die überraschende Erwähnung der "Sorglosen in Zion" vor den Gleichgesinnten in Samaria (Am 6,1) und der Rekurs auf die "Hütte Davids" (Am 9,11) deutlich, dass die amosische Tradition in Juda bearbeitet wurde. Hos 12,1.3 deutet kritisch an, dass in Juda eine religiöse Praxis wie in Israel geübt wurde. Auf solche religiöse Kritik konzentriert sich der Judaspruch (Am 2,4-5). Ein prophetenfeindlicher Umgang, wie ihn Am 2,12 unter Israeliten wahrnimmt und vermutlich Am 2,4 mit dem Stichwort "Lügen" unter Judäern benennt, ist noch Hosea unbekannt ²³. Micha hingegen setzt sich zu seiner Zeit als Prophet für Israel entschieden von anderen "gekauften" und vermutlich judäischen Propheten ab (Mi 3,5-11 vgl. Am 2,4); auch teilen Micha-, Amos- und Hoseaschrift eine genuin israelitische Ansprache in judäischem Kontext²⁴. In der Amosschrift läßt die Aktualisierung israelitischer Tradition mit einer nur geringfügigen judäischen Akzentuierung an einem genuin judäischen Interesse zweifeln. Für die verschriftete Form ist eine israelitische Bearbeitung israelitischer Tradition in Juda nach 720 v.Chr. überzeugender.

Sind die archäologischen Hinweise auf israelitisches Leben im hiskianischen Judäa auch umstritten, so nötigt doch das Szenario von Hosea-, Amos- und Michaschrift, bis zum Erweis des Gegenteils davon auszugehen, dass diese Texte israelitische Tradition unter den Bedingungen eines judäischen Exils reflektieren und aktualisieren. Für den amosischen Israelspruch legt diese Generalthese nahe, als historischen Kontext für die nach Am 2,13-16 drohende,

²¹ Vgl. den Aufsatzband von J. JEREMIAS, *Hosea und Amos* (FAT 13; Tübingen 1996).

²² Zur "judäischen Redaktion" vgl. TH. NAUMANN, *Hoseas Erben*. Strukturen der Nachinterpretation im Buch Hosea (BWANT 131; Stuttgart 1991).

²³ E. BONS, "Das Denotat von כִּזְבִּים 'ihre Lügen' im Judaspruch Am 2,4-5", *ZAW* 108 (1996) 201-213. S.a. das Prophetenbild in Am 7,10-17.

²⁴ Vgl. SCHÜTTE, "Israels Exil", 548 und SCHÜTTE, "Juda", 59-60.

aussichtlose Flucht von Israeliten den drohenden oder bereits erfolgten Feldzug Sanheribs gegen Hiskia anzunehmen. Die soziale Bedrückung nach Am 2,6-8, so sehr sie dem prophetischen Spruchgut von Amos 3-6 entsprechen mag, kann in Micha 2-3 auch vermögenden Menschen im "Haus Jakob/Israel" nachgesagt werden und ist möglicherweise zeitübergreifend. Angesichts einer langwährenden politisch-kulturellen und wirtschaftlichen Überlegenheit Israels über Juda darf über mögliche israelitische Besitzverhältnisse in Juda mangels klarer außerbiblischer Nachweise zwar nur spekuliert werden. Ein wörtliches Verständnis von Micha 1-3 legt jedoch nach meiner Meinung nahe, dass nach 720 v.Chr. israelitische Flüchtlinge in Juda in sehr unterschiedlicher wirtschaftlicher Kraft lebten.

VI. Das Prophetenspruchgut (Amos 3-6)

Erklärt Kratz religionsgeschichtlich die Entstehung der Schriftprophetie aus der altorientalischen Prophetie durch gelehrte Reflexion einer nationalen, religiösen Katastrophe und nennt er als frühestes Beispiel das Jahr 720 v.Chr., so bestätigt der reflektierte Aufbau von Amos 3-4; 5-6, dass uns amosische Prophetie in einer redaktionell bearbeiteten Form vorliegt²⁵.

Am 3,1 beginnt mit einem Hörauf Ruf an die "Kinder Israels". Er führt die direkte Anrede von Am 2,11 weiter. Mit einem ähnlichen Hörauf Ruf an die "Kinder Israels" eröffnet auch Hos 4,1 das hoseanische Spruchgut. Bemerkenswert in der Hoseaschrift ist die Tatsache, dass die "Kinder Israels" terminologisch nur in Hos 2,1-2; 3,1.5; 4,1 verwendet werden. Hos 2,1-2; 3,1.5 schaut bereits auf eine eingetretene Katastrophe zurück. Thematisch wird eine (offenbar schwierige) Phase der Annäherung an Juda und seinen König verhandelt. Die Anrede in Hos 4,1 eröffnet eine Rückschau auf das ältere Prophetenspruchgut, dem selbst diese Anrede fremd ist. Analog eröffnet eine gleiche Anrede in Am 3,1 das amosische Prophetenspruchgut.

Ist man bereit, die Möglichkeit terminologischer Verwandtschaft zwischen den redaktionell verbandelten Schriften Hosea und Amos anzunehmen, so verweist das Interpretament "Rückschau" auf zwei-

²⁵ Vgl. R.G. KRATZ, "Das Neue in der Prophetie des Alten Testaments", *Prophetenstudien* (FAT 74; Tübingen 2011) 49-70.

erlei. Erstens ist der Israelspruch mit der Anrede "Kinder Israels" (Am 2,11) erneut zeitlich bald nach 720 v.Chr. zu deuten. Gleiches wird für die letzte direkte Anrede der "Kinder Israels" in Am 9,7 noch zu zeigen sein. Die eine exilische Situation voraussetzende Aussage von Mi 5,2 unterstreicht, dass in Hosea-, Amos- und Michaschrift die "Kinder Israels" als eine tendenziell "nachstaatliche" allgemeine Bezeichnung für Israel zugehörige Menschen gebraucht wird. Von dieser Charakterisierung rückt allein Am 3,12 ab. In diesem, zeitlich in die Jahre der Staatlichkeit Israels zurückweisenden Fall wird der Begriff jedoch soziologisch näher definiert. Der engere Kreis der "Kinder Israels, die in Samaria wohnen" wird in Am 3,12 auch nicht direkt angesprochen. Eröffnet zweitens die Anrede "Kinder Israels" in Am 3,1 eine Rückschau auf das amosische Prophetenwort, so ist die schriftprophetische Bearbeitung dieser Tradition zielgerichtet, um die eingetretene exilische Situation als Gottestat zu erklären; als solcher Rückblick ist auch dieselbe Anrede in Am 4,5 verständlich.

Die Sozial- und Religionskritik von Amos 3–4 schließt mit einer Anrede des schuldigen "Israel" (Am 4,12). Die Schilderung des militärischen Versagens und die innenpolitische Korruption in Amos 5–6 richtet sich hingegen an das "Haus Israel" (Am 6,14). Beide Zielgruppen lassen sich im nächsten Kapitel näher beschreiben. Markant enden beide Texteinheiten mit einer ultimativen Drohung Gottes gegen jede Zielgruppe. Meiner Einschätzung nach denkt die redaktionelle Bearbeitung bei dem Ende, das Israel in seiner staatlichen Zeit droht, zuerst an das Katastrophenjahr 720 v.Chr.

VII. Die Amazjaszene (Am 7,10-17)

Mit Amos 7 wechselt die schriftprophetische Rückschau vom Spruchgut zu Visionsberichten. Zwischen vier Visionsschilderungen (Am 7,1-8,3) fällt die Begegnung von Amos und dem Priester Amazja. Kompositionsgeschichtlich sollte man besser nicht von einer "Störung"²⁶ der Visionsberichte durch die Amazjaszene sprechen, da sich die Szene aus dem unmittelbar vorausgehenden Textmaterial von Am 7,9 zu entwickeln scheint. Es ist nicht zu klären, ob Am 7,9 bereits Teil des dritten Visionsberichtes war oder erst formuliert

²⁶ So KRATZ, "Worte", 322.

wurde, als Am 7,10-17 eingefügt wurde²⁷. So kann man sich mit der Annahme bescheiden, dass Visionsberichte und Amazjaszene in der vorliegenden Form eine redaktionell gelungene Verbindung unterschiedlicher Texttypen darstellen, die auf einer gemeinsamen Verständnisebene gelesen werden sollen.

Eine Israel-spezifische Terminologie von Am 7,9 vereint beide Texttypen. In ihnen gewinnt erstmals "mein Volk Israel" Aufmerksamkeit (Am 7,8.15; 8,2). Die differenzierte Terminologie in Am 7,10-17 lädt ein, die erkennbar kompositionell angelegte Begrifflichkeit der Amosschrift in ihren Bezügen untereinander zu klären.

Die Anklage des Amazja vor seinem König Jerobeam lautet "verschworen gegen dich hat sich Amos inmitten des Hauses Israel" (Am 7,10). Die Wendung "inmitten des Hauses Israel" deutet auf eine gesellschaftliche Gruppierung, die sich von "Israel" als Landes- und Volksbezeichnung abhebt²⁸. Amos 5-6 ließ erkennen, dass das "Haus Israel" auf militärische Aktionen angesprochen werden kann, und zugleich die lokale Elite des Landes mit großem innenpolitischen Einfluß repräsentiert. In Am 7,11 wird Amos von Amazja zitiert, dass "Israel" neben Jerobeam in die Verbannung muss. Hier, wie auch in Am 7,16-17, bezeichnet "Israel" Menschen, die König Jerobeam untertan sind. Es sind insbesondere wohlhabende Menschen wie Amazja selbst, die der Priester durch die prophetische Rede des Amos bedroht sah²⁹. Diesem "Israel" galt die schriftprophetische Kritik, sich gegen seinen Gott versündigt zu haben (Am 3,14; 4,12; 7,9).

Amos selbst differenziert stärker als Amazja und gewichtet seinen prophetischen Auftrag anders. Für ihn lautet sein primärer Auftrag, er solle "in prophetischer Weise zu *seinem Volk Israel* reden" (Am 7,15). Wenn Amazja darin die Kritik an "Israel" hört und wie die Wohlhabenden ebenfalls mit Abweisung reagiert, so trifft auch ihn das göttliche Gericht (Am 7,16-17). Mit seiner Binnendifferenzierung ergreift Amos in Am 7,16 – wie es Reimer erwartet hat – Partei für die Armen gegen ihre Bedrücker (vgl. auch Am 2,6; 8,4).

²⁷ Nach D.U. ROTTZOLL, *Studien zur Redaktion und Komposition des Amosbuchs* (BZAW 243; Berlin 1996) 251-254, wurde Am 7,9 redaktionell für die Überleitung zu Am 7,10-17 geschaffen; anders plädiert REIMER, *Recht*, 185-186 für eine genuine Zugehörigkeit von Am 7,9 zum Visionsbericht.

²⁸ Vgl. SCHÜTTE, "Säet euch Gerechtigkeit". Adressaten und Anliegen der Hoseaschrift (BWANT 179; Stuttgart 2008), 59-60, 141-142 und Hos 1,6; 5,1; 6,10; 12,1.

²⁹ Assyrische Dokumente bezeugen ebenso wie Am 4,3; 6,7; 7,17, dass Angehörige der Oberschicht bevorzugt deportiert wurden, vgl. B. ODED, *Mass Deportations and Deportees in the Neo-Assyrian Empire* (Wiesbaden 1979) 22-25.

Für diese sprachliche Differenzierung von Gruppen in Israel lassen sich zwei Beobachtungen anfügen. Nach Hosea 4-10; 12-14,1 partizipiert "Israel" neben "Ephraim" an Macht und Reichtum und ist — wie in der Amosschrift — angeklagt, seinen Gott zu verfehlen³⁰. "Mein Volk" bezeichnet ausschließlich Israeliten in der Rolle von Verführten (Hos 4,6.8.12; 11,7). Von Hos 6,11 wird "mein Volk" in einer mit Juda verknüpften redaktionellen Aussage als im Unglück steckend beschrieben; von solcher Not und Wendung kündigt auch die Erzählung um das Prophetenkind "Nicht mein Volk", die Israeliten deutlich von Judäern unterscheidet (Hos 1,8-2,2)³¹. Nach Mi 2,8.9; 3,3 bezeichnet "mein Volk" vor allem die Schwachen in einer israelitischen Gesellschaft (vgl. Am 7,15), die nunmehr in Juda lebt³².

Für "Jerobeam" und "Haus Isaak" kann eine engere Beziehung nur vermutet werden; wie sich das "Haus Isaak" mit dem "Haus Jerobeam" (Am 7,9) deckt, bleibt unklar. Deutlich hingegen ist die gesamte israelitische Terminologie auf das Territorium Israels bezogen und geographisch vom "Land Juda" (Am 7,12) unterschieden. Der differenzierte Gebrauch "Israel"-spezifischer Termini legt aus meiner Sicht nahe, dass Am 7,10-17 bei Abfassung der Amosschrift und nicht vor 720 v.Chr. literarisch geformt wurde.

VIII. Die Visionsberichte (Am 7,1-9; 8,1-3)

Die vier Visionsberichte sind paarweise zu lesen und korrespondieren nach allgemeinem Verständnis mit den Völkersprüchen in Amos 1-2³³. Hier wie da ist Israel die Katastrophe angekündigt. Jedoch differenziert die Amosschrift in den Visionen terminologisch erneut. In den beiden ersten Visionen ist "Jakob" bedroht. In den beiden folgenden Visionen kommt das Ende zu "meinem Volk Israel".

"Jakobs Stolz" bezeichnet bereits in Am 6,8 eine offenbar gehobene und prachtvolle Lebensart; Gott bricht ihn wegen Jakobs aus-

³⁰ Vgl. Am 7,9 mit Hos 8,2; 10,1.

³¹ Hos 6,11 gehört zu einer judäischen (besser: juda-exilischen) Redaktion, vgl. TH. NAUMANN, *Erben*, 51-58.

³² Weitere Belege in Mi 1,9; 3,5. Im Tanach ist עַמִּי / "mein Volk" immer ein Ehrentitel *Israels*.

³³ Vgl. J. JEREMIAS, "Völkersprüche und Visionsberichte im Amosbuch", *Hosea und Amos* (FAT 13; Tübingen 1996) 157-171. Zur 5. Vision bringt STEINS, *Gericht*, 29-37, begründete Einwände.

beuterischen Verhaltens (Am 8,7). So dürfte “Jakob” für “Israel”, die führenden Kreise des Landes, stehen ³⁴. Auch Hos 12,3-15 zeichnet den Stammvater Jakob als zweifelhaftes Vorbild für eine wohlhabende Kaufmannsschaft. Jeremias erkennt in Gottes Schwur bei “Jakobs Stolz” (Am 8,7) ein aus Am 6,8 entwickeltes Sprachspiel, das eher für hos. Überlieferung typisch sei und auf die Redaktion verweist, die beiden Schriften vereinte ³⁵.

Wenn die Visionen in Am 7,2.5 die Kleinheit Jakobs betonen, so spielen sie mit dem Motiv von Schwachheit und Erwählung Jakob-Israels (vgl. Am 3,2) ³⁶. Zweimal wird die Krise der israelitischen Führungskreise verhindert. Schließlich bricht sie “inmitten meines Volkes Israel” auf. Die durch Am 7,9 angekündigte Zerstörung des Landes verschärft sich nochmals in der vierten Vision (Am 8,1-3). Die vorgeschaltete Amazjaszene hält fest, dass die religiöse Führung Israels die schriftprophetische Hilfe “für mein Volk Israel” verhinderte (Am 7,15). Nur so erklärt sich, meiner Auffassung nach, das drohende bittere Los des Volkes. Die Schuld seiner Führung verhinderte ein letztes helfendes Eingreifen Gottes für sein Volk durch seinen Propheten. Am 8,2 verkündet definitiv, dass das Ende “zu meinem Volk Israel” kommt, nicht aber, dass “das Ende meines Volkes Israel” kommt ³⁷.

IX. Weiteres Prophetenspruchgut und die 5. Vision (Am 8,4-9,4)

Wenn Am 8,2 den Kern der amosischen Prophetie verkörpert und Amos den Israeliten nur den “Tod Israels” ³⁸ verkünden konnte, erhebt sich die Frage, warum die Amosschrift nicht mit Am 8,3 endet, sondern fortgeschrieben wurde. Propagandisten des Untergangs gehen entweder selbst in den Untergang oder verstummen, falls sie die Zeit danach erleben. Die Tatsache, dass die Amosschrift fortge-

³⁴ Hos 5,5; 7,10 spricht vergleichbar vom “Stolz Israels”. Auch Am 9,8-9 und die Michaschrift identifizieren “Jakob” mit “Israel”.

³⁵ Vgl. J. JEREMIAS, “Jakob im Amosbuch”, *Hosea und Amos* (FAT 13; Tübingen 1996) 257-271, 260-265.

³⁶ Zum Erwählungsmotiv von יָצָא / “klein” vgl. JEREMIAS, “Jakob”, 258-260; mit anderer Terminologie Dtn 7,7.

³⁷ So betont es G. FLEISCHER, *Von Menschenverkäufern, Baschankühen und Rechtsverkehrern* (BBB 74; Frankfurt/Main 1989) 412-413.

³⁸ H.W. WOLFF, *Dodekapropheten 2. Joel und Amos* (BK XIV/2; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1969) 368.

schrieben wurde, nötigt zu verstehen, wer daran Gefallen fand oder wenigstens einen Sinn darin sah, diese Botschaft zu tradieren. Je später eine Fortschreibung erfolgt sein sollte, um so mehr ist zu erklären, welche Funktion für welche Zielgruppe die Botschaft von dem Ende nach dem eingetretenen staatlichen Ende Israels hatte, dass sie “noch einmal zusammenfassend begründet”³⁹ werden musste.

Die Redaktion der Amosschrift lag in Juda, doch ist keine jüdische Zielgruppe erkennbar. Für den in Am 2,11; 3,1 erkennbaren israelitischen direkten Adressaten ist zu fragen, welcher nachträgliche Aufweis der Katastrophe über Am 8,2 hinaus so hilf- oder gar trostreich sein könnte, um den Überlebenden eine zukunftsweisende Antwort zu verschaffen.

Überraschend nimmt Am 8,4-14 das Grundthema des amosischen Prophetenspruchgutes und der Israelstrophe wieder auf: die Benennung des sozialen Unrechts in Israel. Nach Jeremias weisen inhaltliche und formale Bezüge auf früheres Spruchgut zurück. So beziehen sich Am 8,3.7 auf Am 6,8-10 zurück, Am 8,9-10.13-14 auf Am 5,1-17.18-20, Am 8,4-6 auf Am 2,6-7 und der Höraufruf selbst auf Am 3,1; 4,1; 5,1; allein Am 8,11-12 bleibt ohne Rückbezug⁴⁰. Dennoch, summiert Jeremias, zielt der Höraufruf von Am 8,4-6 auf einen “völlig anderen Sachverhalt” als der Höraufruf von Am 2,6-7⁴¹. Ziele Am 2,6-7 auf Schuldsklaverei und die Behinderung des geordneten Rechtswesens, so äußere sich Am 8,4-6 zu einem betrügerischen Handel zu Lasten armer Kunden.

Im Unterschied zu Am 2,6-7 werden die kritisierten Personen in Am 8,4-10 direkt angesprochen, ohne ihnen eine kollektive Bezeichnung zu verleihen⁴². Wurden in Am 2,6-16 die “Kinder Israels” direkt angesprochen, dass sie solchem Unrecht tatenlos zusehen und dem Gottesgericht nicht entfliehen werden, so droht jenen in Am 8,4-10 direkt angesprochenen Unrechtstätern, Männer und Frauen aus der israelitischen Oberschicht, das Ende ihres Lebensstils. Der anschließende Wechsel in die 3. Pers. zeigt, dass Am 8,11-14 ihr Ge-

³⁹ J. JEREMIAS, “Am 8,4-7 — ein Kommentar zu 2,6f.”, *Hosea und Amos* (FAT 13; Tübingen 1996) 231-243, 232.

⁴⁰ JEREMIAS, “Am 8,4-7”, 232-233; Am 8,11-12 hat nur “Anklänge” an Am 4,2.8.

⁴¹ JEREMIAS, “Am 8,4-7”, 242.

⁴² Dies ist typisch für Am 3-6, vgl. I. JARUZELSKA, *Amos and the Officialdom in the Kingdom of Israel* (Uniwersytet Im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu, Seria Socjologia 25; Poznan 1998) 140.

schick nun deutet: jene Menschen werden sich im Osten verlieren⁴³. Die 5. Vision (Am 9,1-4), die sich in vielen Einzelheiten von den vorausgegangenen Visionspaaren unterscheidet, betont nochmals die todgeweihte Aussichtslosigkeit dieser Gruppe. Am 9,4 charakterisiert sie zuletzt als Deportierte⁴⁴.

Die direkte Anrede in Am 8,4-10 zielt wie im Prophetenspruchgut von Amos 3-6 nicht auf den wirklichen Hörer/Leser des Textes. Der sprachliche Wechsel ab Am 8,11 weist auf einen anderen, eigentlichen Adressaten hin, der in Am 8,4-9,4 unbenannt bleibt. Sein Geschick ist gerade nicht die Deportation in die Ferne⁴⁵. Er lebt, wenn die 5. Vision wie die ersten Visionen in ihrer literarischen Gestalt Israels staatliches Ende voraussetzt, nach 720 v.Chr. am ehesten in Juda.

Jeremias vergleicht Am 8,4-6 mit Mi 6,9-16 und ordnet es historisch dem ausgehenden 7. bis beginnenden 6. Jh. v.Chr. zu⁴⁶. Doch ist einer solchen sozialgeschichtlichen Festlegung vorsichtig zu begegnen. Archäologisch sind die sozialgeschichtlichen Aspekte von Am 2,6-7; 8,4-6 kaum zu ermitteln und noch unbewiesen⁴⁷. So läßt

⁴³ Die Wendungen "seht, es kommen Tage" und "das Wort JHWHs hören" weisen auf jer und dtn Sprache hin (WOLFF, *Dodekapropheton* 2, 380; ROTTZOLL, *Studien*, 264-265). Dieses Merkmal muss nicht zwangsläufig ein Argument der Spätdatierung sein, sondern kann auch als Kennzeichen der sich entwickelnden juda-exilischen israelitischen Theologensprache verstanden werden, die uns ausgereift in Jer gegenübertritt.

⁴⁴ J. JEREMIAS, "Das unzugängliche Heiligtum. Zur letzten Vision des Amos", *Hosea und Amos* (FAT 13; Tübingen 1996) 246, greift zu weit zurück, wenn er בָּלֵם / "sie alle" (Am 9,1) auf "mein Volk" (Am 8,2) statt auf die Deportierten ("sie" in Am 8,11-14) bezieht.

⁴⁵ Droht den in Am 2,14-16 angesprochenen "Kindern Israels" im Fliehen (נוס und בָּלֵם vgl. Am 9,1) unausweichlich Gottes Kommen zum Gericht, erreicht nach Am 9,1-4 die unbenannten Fliehenden noch im Exil der Tod.

⁴⁶ JEREMIAS, "Am 8,4-7", 243, vgl. H.W. WOLFF, *Dodekapropheton* 4. Micha (BK XIV/4; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1982) 163-164.

⁴⁷ Vgl. den Exkurs von G. FLEISCHER, *Menschenverkäufer*, 391-401, insbesondere 397 zur Problematik judäischer Befunde nach Ankunft israelitischer Flüchtlinge ab 733 v. Chr. So ist die sozialgeschichtliche Bedeutung des archäologisch begründeten (I. FINKELSTEIN, "The Rise of Jerusalem and Judah: The Missing Link", *Jerusalem in Bible and Archaeology. The First Temple Period* [eds. G. VAUGHN – A.E. KILLEBREW] [SBL.SS 18; Atlanta, GA 2003] 81-101) und literarisch noch für die Josiazeit (2 Kön 23,11 antiochenischer Text [ANT]; vgl. A. SCHENKER, *Textgeschichte*, 69-71) belegten Einflusses eines omridischen Baustils in Jerusalem nicht ausgelotet. Bemerkenswert ist auch der samarische Baustil im judäischen Ramat Rahel (Y. Yadin), vgl. O. Lipschits

sich nicht klären, ob die von Am 8,4-10 beschriebenen Deportierten jene Gruppe widerspiegeln, der schon Amos in der Rückschau von Amos 3-6 die Deportierung androhte, oder ob judäische Verhältnisse angesprochen werden, in denen sich israelitische Sozialgeschichte unter den Bedingungen des judäischen Exils fortsetzte⁴⁸. Deutlich wird jedoch nach der Ansage der nationalen Katastrophe in Am 8,2, und aufgrund der von mir vorgelegten Beobachtungen, dass die Amosschrift ab Am 8,4 eine differenzierte Sicht auf das Geschick von israelitischen Gruppen nach 720 v. Chr. eröffnet.

X. Die Doxologie Am 9,5-6

Das Fehlen jeglicher charakteristischer "Israel"-Terminologie in Am 8,4-9,4 lässt vermuten, dass ihre Texte eher eine auf Am 9,7-15 hinleitende Funktion haben. Die von Rütterswörden beschriebene Ringkomposition in Am 8,11-9,15 kann mit dieser Überlegung durchaus übereinstimmen. Seine Festlegung auf Am 9,7-15 als redaktionell erweiternder Zug muss aber als wenig aussagefähig gelten, wenn die Doxologie von Am 9,5-6 nicht als ursprüngliches Ende der Amosschrift erweisbar ist.

K. Koch hat herausgearbeitet, dass die Doxologien in Am 4,13; 5,8-9; 9,5-6 zusammenhängen und nur leicht in ihren Kontext eingebunden sind⁴⁹. Alle Doxologien beschließen eine mit שמעו eingeleitete Spruchsammlung. Allerdings fehlt eine solche Doxologie zu Am 3,1. Koch deutet daher den Abschluß נאם-יהוה / "Spruch JHWHs" (Am 3,15) als gleichwertigen Ersatz für das die Doxologien abschließende יהוה שמו / "JHWH sein Name". In Am 8,3-9,6 schließt die Spruchsammlung mit der Doxologie allerdings auch die 5. Vision ein. Koch trägt seiner Untersuchung zuletzt Am 1,2 als freies hymnisches Stück nach, um auch den Völkersprüchen, wenn schon keinen doxologischen Abschluss, so doch wenigsten eine hymnische Eröffnung zu geben. Dabei bleibt ihm die Andersartigkeit von Am 1,2 zu den Doxologien deutlich. So kann Koch

– Y. Gadot – B. Arubas – M. Oeming, "Palace and Village, Paradise and Oblivion: Unraveling the Riddles of Ramat Rahel", *Near Eastern Archaeology* 74.1 (2011) 1-49, 4.

⁴⁸ Vielleicht fallen auch beide Möglichkeiten ineinander; s.a. Am 9,10.

⁴⁹ K. KOCH, "Die Rolle der hymnischen Abschnitte in der Komposition des Amos-Buches", *ZAW* 86 (1974) 504-537.

nur ein vages kompositorisches Strukturmuster in Amos beschreiben, dessen gestalterische Absicht unbestimmt bleiben muss. Die Abschlüsse mit "Spruch JHWHs" oder mit Doxologie plus "JHWH sein Name" können sehr wohl später als die Höraufrufe mit ihren Prophetensprüchen entwickelt worden sein ⁵⁰.

Koch läßt die Datierung der amosischen Doxologien offen ⁵¹. Auch H.-P. Mathys urteilt in seiner Untersuchung gebetsartiger Abschlüsse in biblischen Prosatexten nur vorsichtig. Er setzt aber für die Amosdoxologien "ein längeres Wachstum des Büchlein voraus" ⁵². Die Amosdoxologien nötigen daher nicht zu dem Schluss, dass – über Kochs Analysen hinausgehend – mit Am 9,5-6 ein alter Abschluss der Amosschrift gegeben gewesen sei ⁵³. Lassen sich kompositionsgeschichtlich die Amos-Doxologien klar aus dem Kontext isolieren und redaktionsgeschichtlich eher einem späteren Textstadium zuweisen ⁵⁴, so rückt sofort der nach Rüterswörden isoliert stehende Vers Am 9,7 in das Zentrum seiner Ringstruktur. Die vermeintliche Randaussage wird unversehens zur Kernaussage. Nach dem Blick auf das Los der Deportierten eröffnet Am 9,7 für mein Verständnis die Perspektive auf jene Menschen, die sich vor der assyrischen Eroberung Israels nach Juda flüchten konnten.

XI. Der Amossschluß (Am 9,7-15)

Die Amosschrift entwickelt nach der retrospektiven theologischen Begründung der nationalen Katastrophe (Am 3,1-8,3) in Am 9,7-15 eine zweite Nachkriegsperspektive. Am 9,7 schlägt mit der

⁵⁰ Zu beachten ist auch der hymnische Einschub in Hos 12,6 יהוה אלהי הצבאות יהוה זכרו.

⁵¹ KOCH, "Rolle", 535-536.

⁵² H.-P. MATHYS, *Dichter und Beter*. Theologen aus spätalttestamentlicher Zeit (OBO 132; Freiburg 1994) 112.

⁵³ Die über Koch hinausgehende Folgerung, Am 9,5-6 bilde mit Am 1,1-2 „einen kunstvollen Rahmen für das Amosbuch in seiner exilischen Gestalt“ (J. JEREMIAS, *Der Prophet Amos* [ATD 24/2; Göttingen 1995] 128; vgl. J. NOGALSKI, *Literary Precursors to the Book of the Twelve* [BZAW 217; Berlin 1993] 80, 96; E.-J. WASCHKE, "Die fünfte Vision des Amosbuches (9,1-4) – Eine Nachinterpretation", *ZAW* 106 [1994] 444, RÜTERSWÖRDEN, "Rosen", 215) ist kompositionsgeschichtlich nicht zu rechtfertigen.

⁵⁴ Jedoch besteht motivgeschichtlich eine Parallele von Am 4,13 zu Mi 1,3.

Anrede der "Kinder Israels" einen Bogen zu Am 2,11⁵⁵. Als direkter Adressat der Amosschrift lebt diese soziologisch undifferenzierte Gruppe von Israeliten mit den Redaktoren — wie Am 9,8-15 erneut wahrscheinlich macht — in Juda. Während den Deportierten der Tod beschieden wurde, richtet Am 9,7 an die nach Juda Geretteten die Frage nach ihrer Zukunft. Die exegetische oder vielleicht gar grammatisch zu entscheidende Frage nach der Stellung Israels vor Gott entscheidet sich aus dem Kontext so, dass Israeliten als von Gott Erwählte (Am 3,1 vgl. der "kleine Jakob" in Am 7,2.5) nach Am 9,8-15 in Juda eine Zukunft haben, die sie einmal in ihre Heimat Israel zurückbringen wird.

Am 9,8-10 rekapituliert die nachstaatliche Existenz Israels vor den Ohren der "Kinder Israels". Das Königreich Israels ist erloschen. Das ehemals maßgebende "Haus Israel" steht im Gericht der Nationen. So galt den Deportierten (Am 8,4-9,4) der Tod. Den "Sündern meines Volkes" im judäischen Exil (vgl. Am 2,6-16) droht er auch. Es ist die gleiche Differenzierung, die Hos 1,2-2,3 bei der Erzählung der Namensgebung für Hoseas Kinder vornimmt. "Jesreel" benennt das Ende des Königtums in Israel (Hos 1,4); es wird in der anschließenden Neudeutung (Hos 1,5) bekräftigt. "Lo-Ruchama" benennt das Gericht über das "Haus Israel", das in der Neudeutung Hoffnung durch das "Haus Juda" gewinnt (Hos 1,6-7)⁵⁶. "Lo-Ammi" wird in der Neudeutung erneut zu "mein Volk" in der Gemeinschaft von Israeliten und Judäern (Hos 1,9-2,3). Formuliert Am 9,8 eine Rettungsperspektive für das "Haus Jakob", so gilt sie dem "gesiebten" Haus Israel (Am 9,9) in Juda; diese begriffliche Gleichsetzung unterstreichen Anreden in Mi 3,1.9.

Wie der Anfang der Hoseaschrift thematisiert, zielen die israelitischen Redaktoren in Juda darauf, sich mit einer Herrschaft zu verbinden, die über Judäer und Israeliten gesetzt ist (Hos 2,2). Hos 3,5 präzisiert, dass die davidische Herrschaft die erklärte Hoffnung der hos. Redaktoren ist. Ebenso konsequent setzt Am 9,11 die israelitische Perspektive in Am 9 fort mit einem Blick auf das Haus David. In der davidischen Dynastie sieht Am 9,11-12 neue Hoffnung für Israel.

⁵⁵ Der Rückgriff auf exodustheologische Aussagen unterstreicht den spezifisch israelitischen Charakter der Anrede "Kinder Israels" (Am 2,10-11; 3,1; 9,7).

⁵⁶ Zur von der masoretischen Satzgliederung abweichenden Textinterpretation vgl. SCHÜTTE, "Juda", 64.

Mit der הנפלת דויד / “verfallenen Hütte Davids” wird in Am 9,11 ein ruinöser Zustand des Hauses Davids beschrieben. Eine Deutung des Begriffes auf das 586 v.Chr. zerstörte Jerusalem, den Tempel oder das Großreich Davids⁵⁷ orientiert sich weder an der ältesten außerbiblischen Erwähnung des Hauses David, die darin eine militärische Repräsentanz erkennen läßt, noch an dem biblischen Befund, der auf die Herrscherfamilie verweist⁵⁸. Berücksichtigt man die wahrscheinliche Verflechtung des Herrscherhauses mit den Führungspositionen des Heeres, so bezeichnet das “Haus David” die lokale Macht von Juda-Jerusalem.

Grammatisch auffällig sind in MT Am 9,11 die sehr unterschiedlichen Suffixe, die in LXX einheitlich auf die “Hütte Davids” bezogen werden⁵⁹. Im Hebräischen bezieht sich ובניחיה / “und ich baue sie [fem. sing.]” auf die סכת דויד / “Hütte Davids”, während הרסתי / “seine [masc. sing.] Niedergerissenen” auf David rekurriert. Demnach handelt es sich bei den “Niedergerissenen” wohl um Menschen⁶⁰. Das schwierige Suffix von ונדרתי את־פרציהן / “und ich werde ihre [fem. pl.] Breschen mauern” kann sich allein proleptisch auf הרסתי / “seine Niedergerissenen” beziehen⁶¹. Diese Aussage läßt sich daher auch als Verluste an Menschen deuten, wenngleich die Zerstörung von Städten im Vordergrund stehen bleibt und auch ihrerseits auf den Begriff “Niedergerissene” einwirkt. Am 9,12 bestätigt die Deutung von “seine Niedergerissenen” auf Menschen, als der Satz unvermittelt mit יירשו / “sie [masc. pl.] nehmen in Besitz” beginnt.

Das Bild einer Restitution des Hauses David trifft in einem juda-exilischen israelitischen Kontext am ehesten auf das Juda nach dem

⁵⁷ Z.B. WOLFF, *Dodekapropheton* 2, 407: Jerusalem; ROTTZOLL, *Studien*, 277: Davids Großreich.

⁵⁸ Zur Tell Dan-Inschrift s. M. WEIPPERT, *Historisches Textbuch zum Alten Testament* (GAT [ATD Ergänzungsreihe] 10; Göttingen 2010) 267-269, die Lesevariante bei E. LIPINSKI, *On the Skirts of Canaan in the Iron Age* (OLA 153; Leuven 2006) 325 Anm. 34; J. STRANGE, “Joram, King of Israel and Judah”, *VT* 25 (1975) 191-201. “Haus David” vgl. Jes 7,13; 22,22; Jer 21,12; 1 Sam 20,15; 2 Sam 3,1.6; 1 Kön 12,20; 2 Kön 17,21 sowie die Funktion des Pendants “Haus Israel” in Am 5,1.3.4.25; 6,1.14.

⁵⁹ Auch im Weiteren zeigt LXX eine vereinfachende, jüngere Textversion.

⁶⁰ Ex 15,7 bezieht sich das Verb הרס / “einreißen” auf den Untergang der Ägypter.

⁶¹ Zu den Suffixbezügen vgl. F.I. ANDERSEN – D.N. FREEDMAN, *Amos* (AB 24A; New York 1989) 889.

Feldzug des Assyrsers Sanherib (701 v.Chr.) zu. Für die gescheiterte antiassyrische Koalition, deren treibende Kraft Hiskia gewesen war, hatten die Judäer (und vermutlich auch die zu ihnen geflüchteten Israeliten) einen hohen Tribut zahlen müssen. Juda verlor Land und Leute⁶². Auf das nach späterer Legende (2 Könige 18–19) wunderbar gerettete Jerusalem wird vielleicht schon in Hos 1,6bß.7 hingewiesen.

Der Rückbezug auf eine fast mythische Vorzeit (כימי עולם, Am 9,11 vgl. Mi 7,11; Mal 3,4) ist nicht voreilig mit textfremden Vorstellungen vom Großreich Davids zu füllen⁶³. Es wird eine alte Stärke des judäischen Herrscherhauses beschworen, damit (למען, Am 9,12) es alte Besitzansprüche des Gottes (und Staates!) von Israel verwirkliche, dessen Name einst über bestimmte Völker ausgesprochen wurde⁶⁴. Stellvertretend für alle Großmachtserinnerungen *Israels* (vgl. Am 1,3–2,3) steht der Name Edoms⁶⁵. So dürfte Am 9,11–12 traditionsgeschichtlich am Anfang der biblischen Legendenbildung vom davidischen Großreich stehen.

Für eine juda-exilische Auslegung von Am 9,13–15 spricht die Rede vom “wenden der Gefangenschaft meines Volkes Israel” (Am 9,14). Zu deutlich unterscheidet die übrige Amosschrift “Israel” und “Juda”, als dass ihr nun eine Identifikation unterstellt werden kann. Die gleiche Differenzierung beider Volksgrößen zeigt das Jeremia-buch⁶⁶. Heißt es dort “ich wende die Gefangenschaft Judas und die Gefangenschaft Israels und baue sie auf” (Jer 33,7), so dürfte sich historisch eine ältere שבות עמי ישראל / “Gefangenschaft meines Volkes Israel” (Am 9,14) von einer jüngeren שבות יהודה וירושלם / “Gefangenschaft Judas und Jerusalems” (Joel 4,1) unterscheiden. Schließlich verheißt die Gotteszusage von Am 9,15 Israel, “und nicht werden sie *wiederum* (עוד) ausgerissen von ihrem Erdboden”. Die Möglichkeit, diese Aussage auf die Folgen der assyrischen Besetzung

⁶² Vgl. TUAT I, 388–391.

⁶³ Z.B. M. PAUL, *Amos* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis, MN) 292: “The Davidic empire will also rule *once again* over all those nations ‘over whom my name has been called’” (kursive Hervorhebung durch W.S.). Archäologisch spricht bislang alles gegen ein historisches Großreich Davids, vgl. M. HUBER, *Gab es ein davidisch-salomonisches Großreich?* (SBB 64; Stuttgart 2010).

⁶⁴ Zu diesem Ausdruck vgl. PAUL, *Amos*, 292.

⁶⁵ Zur Rolle Edoms in den Völkersprüchen vgl. SCHÜTTE, “Israels Exil”, 535–544.

⁶⁶ Zum schriftprophetischen Zeugnis zweier Landsmannschaften in Juda vgl. SCHÜTTE, “Juda”, 62–70.

Israels 720 v.Chr. zu beziehen, unterstreicht die biblische Geschichtsschreibung. 2 Chr 33,8 sagt Gott Manasse zu “und ich fahre nicht fort (לֹא אוֹסִיף), den Fuß Israels wegzutreiben vom Erdboden”. Literarisch bezieht sich diese Aussage auf das Ende des Staates Israel, das zuvor knapp in einer Hiskiaredede (2 Chr 30,6-9) angesprochen ist. Noch für die späte Königszeit unterscheidet 2 Chronik literarisch — ähnlich wie Jeremia — zwischen Israel und Juda (2 Chr 34,9.21). So ist der Eindruck unabweislich, dass 2 Chr 33,8 wie Am 9,15 aus der Perspektive eines israelitischen Exils in Juda formuliert ist.

Ähnlich urteilt 2 Kön 13,23 rückschauend über Israel in der Zeit seines Königs Joas: “und JHWH war ihnen gnädig und erbarmte sich ihrer und wandte sich ihnen zu um seines Bundes willen mit Abraham, Isaak und Jakob; und er ist nicht willig gewesen sie zu verderben und hat sie nicht von seinem Angesicht weg verworfen bis jetzt.” Damit setzt es sich selbst in Widerspruch zu 2 Kön 17,23 und konstatiert ein Fortbestehen Israels aus judäischer Perspektive bis in babylonische Zeit ⁶⁷.

Am 9,11-15 gilt in deutscher Tradition “eher unumstritten” ⁶⁸ als später Nachtrag zur Amosschrift und wird gern nochmals in mehrere Redaktionsschichten unterteilt ⁶⁹. Doch vermag ich keine Gründe zu erkennen, die zwingend zu redaktionskritischen Unterscheidungen führen müssten. Die wiederholt betonte göttliche Autorität, gerade auch in von redaktionellen Phrasen eröffneten Worten wäre demnach weniger ein Indiz für unterschiedliche Redaktionen, als die nach 720 v.Chr. bei der Verschriftung des Textes für notwendig empfundene Bestätigung gelehrter Reflexion durch die höchste Autorität ⁷⁰.

⁶⁷ Zur juda-exilischen Perspektive der Königebücher vgl. W. SCHÜTTE, “David, König Israels. Zum ‘Prophetenschweigen’ im DtrG” (erscheint in BZ 57,1 [2013]). Noch später wählen die Jonasschrift und das deuterokanonische Buch Tobit für ihre Fiktion die assyrische Diaspora nach 720 v.Chr. (Tob 1,1-2) statt der dem heutigen Bewußtsein nahen babylonischen Diaspora.

⁶⁸ J. WÖHRLE, *Die frühen Sammlungen des Zwölfprophetenbuchs* (BZAW 360; Berlin 2006) 119, mit Literaturverweisen.

⁶⁹ Vgl. z.B. WÖHRLE, *Sammlungen*, 119-122, und anders A. SCHAT, *Die Entstehung des Zwölfprophetenbuchs* (BZAW 260; Berlin 1998) 96-97. Dagegen betont T.S. HADJIEV, *The Composition and Redaction of the Book of Amos* (BZAW 393; Berlin 2009) 122-123, eine durch Stichwortverknüpfungen gegebene redaktionelle Einheit von Am 9,7-15.

⁷⁰ Dies betont auch RÜTERSWORDEN, “Rosen”, 215. Tatsächlich dominiert נאם־יהוה / “Spruch JHWHs” in Hosea und Amos Aussagen, die sich als gelehrte

XII. Die Amosschrift

Als israelitische juda-exilische Lektüre zeigt Amos 1–9 eine kohärente und transparente Komposition⁷¹. Ausgehend von der problematischen Situation des noch frischen Exils in Juda (Amos 1–2) wird historische Schuld und ihre Wirkung differenziert beschrieben (Am 3,1–8,3). Nach Verwerfung jeder Hoffnung für die deportierten Angehörigen der 10 Stämme (Am 8,4–9,4) und einer Anerkennung des *status quo* (Am 9,7–10) schließt die Amosschrift mit einer Hoffnungsperspektive für Israel in Juda (Am 9,11–15). Abgesehen von den Doxologien ist keine durchgehende Redaktionsschicht von dieser Grundkomposition abzuheben. Kleinere textliche Anpassungen sind beim Ausbilden des späteren Kanons jedoch nicht auszuschließen. Wie bereits Jeremias vermutete, dürfte die Amosschrift zur Ergänzung der Hoseasschrift literarisch in einem Wurf verfasst worden sein⁷². Für die Ausbildung seiner unterschiedlichen Textteile kann nur eine kurze Zeitspanne von 720 v.Chr bis in die Manassezeit veranschlagt werden. Vermutlich lag Hosea 4–14 bereits vor, als es um Hosea 1–2(.3) erweitert und mit der Amosschrift verknüpft wurde⁷³. Aus einer juda-exilischen israelitischen Sicht läßt sich die Korrespondenz von Hosea 1(–3); Amos (8–)9 als Rahmen der ältesten Hosea-Amos-Schrift verstehen.

Ich hoffe, in der notwendigen Knappheit für die These einer frühen und im wesentlichen vollständigen Entstehung der Amosschrift im 7. Jh. v.Chr. doch hinreichend und überzeugend argumentiert zu haben. Eine entsprechende Darlegung zur Entstehung der Hoseasschrift möchte ich bald folgen lassen.

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Reflexion der prophetischen Überlieferung in juda-exilischem Kontext verstehen lassen. Ihre Entwicklung bis zur endgültigen Verschriftung könnte durch die Einleitungssphrasen Am 9,11.13 vgl. Hos 2,15.18.23 gekennzeichnet sein.

⁷¹ Der Ausdruck "jüdisches Exil" Israels will einerseits eine kritische sprachliche Entsprechung zum Fachbegriff des "babylonischen Exils" sein. Die israelitische Heimkehrhoffnung von Am 9,11–15 rechtfertigt andererseits, den Zufluchtsort Juda als (halb-freiwilliges) Exil Israels zu verstehen.

⁷² JEREMIAS, "Anfänge", 34–54.

⁷³ Zur Komposition der Hoseasschrift vgl. vorläufig SCHÜTTE, "Juda", 64.

SUMMARY

The oracles of Amos written in the 8th century BCE were brought from the Kingdom of Israel to Judah after the fall of Samaria in 720 BCE. We think that the Israelites in “exile” in Judah were hoping for a restoration at that time. The Book of Amos can be interpreted in this context: it explains the feelings of Israelite refugees in Judah (Amos 1–2), the responsibility of the Israelite elite for the disaster (Amos 3–6), the reason why the people bear the consequences of the catastrophe (Amos 7), and why there is hope for the refugees in Judah, but not for the exiles in Assyria (Amos 8–9).

Abolishers of the Law in Early Judaism and Matthew 5,17-20 ¹

Matthew's view of the Jewish law has divided scholarship on the First Gospel. While most interpreters conclude that Matthew believed that Jewish followers of Jesus ought to observe the law ², a number of scholars continue to resist this interpretation ³. As R. Deines argues, Matthew 5,17-20, although seemingly affirming obedience to the law, "forms the cornerstone for both interpretative traditions" ⁴. In part, the disagreement revolves around the interpretation of the verb πληρόω ("to fulfill"). Does Matthew intend to signify the salvation-historical fulfillment of the law so that it no longer requires keeping? ⁵ Or does Matthew's Jesus use πληρόω synonymously with ποιέω ("to do"; cf. Matt 5,19)? ⁶

¹ I am thankful to both Joel Marcus of Duke Divinity School and participants in the Matthew Section at the Annual Conference of the Society of Biblical Literature, New Orleans, LA, November 24, 2009, for their helpful comments on earlier drafts of this paper.

² For instance, J.A. OVERMAN, *Matthew's Gospel and Formative Judaism*. The Social World of the Matthean Community (Minneapolis, MN 1990); A.J. SALDARINI, *Matthew's Christian-Jewish Community* (Chicago, IL 1994); D.C. SIM, *The Gospel of Matthew and Christian Judaism*. The History and Social Setting of the Matthean Community (Edinburgh 1999); M. VAHRENHORST, "Ihr sollt überhaupt nicht schwören". Matthäus im halachischen Diskurs (WMANT 95; Neukirchen-Vluyn 2002); M. KONRADT, "Die vollkommene Erfüllung der Tora und der Konflikt mit den Pharisäern im Matthäusevangelium", *Das Gesetz im frühen Judentum und im Neuen Testament* (eds. D. SÄNGER et al.) (NTOA 57; Göttingen 2006) 129-152; and B.T. VIVIANO, *Matthew and His World*. The Gospel of the Open Jewish Christians. Studies in Biblical Theology (NTOA 61; Göttingen 2007).

³ Cf. D.A. HAGNER, "Matthew: Apostate, Reformer, Revolutionary?", *NTS* 49 (2003) 193-209; P. FOSTER, *Community, Law, and Mission in Matthew's Gospel* (WUNT 2/177; Tübingen 2004); R. DEINES, *Die Gerechtigkeit der Tora im Reich des Messias*. Mt 5,13-20 als Schlüsseltext der matthäischen Theologie (WUNT 177; Tübingen 2005); and R. DEINES, "Not the Law but the Messiah: Law and Righteousness in the Gospel of Matthew—An Ongoing Debate", *Built Upon the Rock*. Studies in the Gospel of Matthew (eds. D.M. GURTNER – J. NOLLAND) (Grand Rapids, MI 2008) 53-84.

⁴ Deines, "Not the Law", 70.

⁵ Cf. J.P. MEIER, *Law and History in Matthew's Gospel* (Rome 1979) 73-82, and R.T. FRANCE, *The Gospel of Matthew* (NICNT; Grand Rapids, MI 2007) 182-183.

⁶ Cf. H.D. BETZ, *The Sermon on the Mount: A Commentary on the Sermon on the Mount, including the Sermon on the Plain* (Matthew 5:3–7:27 and Luke 6:20-49) (Hermeneia; Minneapolis, MN 1995) 178.

Despite the significant attention scholars have given to the meaning of πληρόω Matthew's Jesus uses the verb only once in Matt 5,17-20 (and, more broadly, in the Sermon on the Mount). In contrast, twice in Matthew 5,17 Jesus says that he has not come to abolish (καταλύω) the law or the prophets, while once in verse 19 he warns that anyone abolishing (λύω) the smallest of commandments, or teaching others to do so, will be the least in the kingdom of heaven⁷. The threefold occurrence of the words καταλύω and λύω suggests that their meanings are of central importance for understanding Matthew's concerns in this passage, yet few have attempted to understand their usage in Matt 5,17-20 in light of other occurrences of the word in Jewish literature⁸. The following argument addresses this lacuna in the secondary literature by focusing on two particular events around which these words cluster: the Antiochan persecution and the destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E. Although Jewish literature uses καταλύω and λύω with reference to the abolishment of the law elsewhere⁹, I believe that their use in reference to the Antiochan persecution and the destruction of the Temple are particularly informative for understanding Matthew's concerns in Matt 5,17-20.

⁷ In contrast to D.L. BALCH ("The Greek Political Topos περί νόμων and Matthew 5:17, 19, and 16:19", *Social History of the Matthean Community. Cross-Disciplinary Approaches* [ed. D.L. BALCH] [Minneapolis, MN 1991] 68-84 [79]), F. BÜCHSEL ("λύω", *TDNT* IV, 328-356) demonstrates that the cognates (κατα)λύω and λύω may be used synonymously when referring to the law.

⁸ Cf., for instance, the discussions of καταλύω in U. LUZ, "Die Erfüllung des Gesetzes bei Matthäus (Mt 5:17-20)", *ZTK* 75.4 (1978) 398-435, and BALCH, "The Greek Political Topos". (Κατα)λύω never occurs in the LXX translation of the HB in reference to abolishing the law. This usage also occurs in non-Jewish Greek literature. For instance, Dio Chrysostom claims that a city cannot be saved if the law has been abolished (λυθέντος, *Oration* 75.10). Similarly, Josephus uses καταλύω in reference to Julius Caesar, who, he says, overthrew Roman democracy (καταλύσει τῆς δημοκρατίας), bringing great evils upon the entire city of Rome (*A.J.* 19.173-174), thereby demonstrating that abolishment of any people's law has disastrous consequences. Josephus likewise claims that Izates' subjects accused him of abolishing ancestral customs and embracing foreign (i.e. Jewish) customs (καταλύσαντα μὲν τὰ πάτρια ξένων δ' ἐραστήν ἐθῶν γεγόμενον, *A.J.* 20.81).

⁹ Outside of these two clusters, (κατα)λύω is used another eighteen times in Jewish literature in relation to the law, almost all of which deal with laws such as Sabbath, circumcision, dietary laws, and temple service.

I. The Hellenizers and the Antiochan Persecution

The events surrounding what is often referred to as the Antiochan persecution were ingrained in the minds of many Second Temple Jews. At least four detailed works, 1, 2, and 4 Maccabees as well as the five-volume work of Jason of Cyrene, were written to retell this episode of Jewish history, while four other works, Daniel, the *Testament of Moses*, and Josephus's *Antiquities* and the *Jewish War* also recount or allude to these events. Further, 1 Macc 4,36-59, 2 Macc 1,1-2,18, and 10,1-8 describe the celebration of the rededication of the Temple after this attack, a celebration that Josephus makes clear in *Ant.* 12.324-25 was observed throughout the late Second Temple period. In light of the importance which many Jews accorded these events, it is noteworthy that three authors use the words καταλύω, λύω, and κατάλυσις twelve times in four different accounts of the Antiochan persecution: three times in 2 Maccabees, six times in 4 Maccabees, twice in *Antiquities*, and once in the *War*.

As the author of 2 Maccabees summarizes his work, he says that, through zeal for Judaism, the people repelled Antiochus Epiphanes and "restored the laws that were about to be abolished" (τοὺς μέλλοντας καταλύεσθαι νόμους ἐπανορθῶσαι, 2,22). But who was threatening to abolish the law? According to 2 Macc 4,9-11, it was Jason, the brother of the high priest Onias, who bought Antiochus's support in order to supplant his brother as high priest, who desired to build a gymnasium, and who wanted to make the men of Jerusalem citizens of Antioch. The author portrays these reforms as innovations that led to the introduction of new customs and to the abolishment (καταλύω) of lawful living and the neglect of the temple cult. Finally, in 2 Macc 8,15-17, Judas Maccabeus gathers an army together and inspires them with the accusation that their enemies had abolished their ancestral way of life (τὴν τῆς προγονικῆς πολιτείας κατάλυσιν). The result of this law abolishment, according to 2 Macc 4,16-17, was that "harsh disaster surrounded them, and those whose ways of living they admired and wished to imitate completely became hostile and punished them", for "irreverence to the divine laws is no light matter".

The author of 4 Maccabees picks up and expands upon this theme of law abolishment. This is not surprising given the probability that 4 Maccabees used 2 Maccabees as a source, as J.W. van Henten ar-

gues¹⁰. Nonetheless, the increased frequency of καταλύω in 4 Maccabees demonstrates that the author is not merely passively preserving this link between the word and the Antiochan persecution, already established by 2 Maccabees, but is further emphasizing this connection. Antiochus abolishes (καταλύω) the Jewish high priest Onias, and unlawfully makes Onias's brother Jason high priest (4,15-16). In a manner befitting his law-abolishing appointment to the high priesthood, Jason repays Antiochus for the office by changing the nation's way of life and government including the building of a gymnasium to replace the abolished Temple service (ἀλλὰ καὶ καταλύσαι τὴν τοῦ ἱεροῦ κηδεμονίαν, 4,20). 4 Maccabees 4,21, following 2 Maccabees, links this abolishing of the law to the Antiochan persecution. Jason's unlawful actions anger divine justice and lead to the Antiochan persecution. According to 4 Macc 4,24, Antiochus is not able to abolish (καταλύσαι) the observance of the law because many Jews abolished (καταλυομένως) his decrees and punishments. One example of such abolishment of Antiochus's decrees occurs in 4 Maccabees 5, when Antiochus tries to force a priest named Eleazer to eat pork. The old priest's response to Antiochus is as follows: "Do not think that it would be a small sin to eat unclean food, for to transgress the law in small or larger matters is of equal seriousness, for in each the law is disdained" (5,19-21). Eleazar argues that the eating of unclean meat, even under compulsion of death, is an abolishment of the ancestral law (τὸν πατριὸν καταλύσαι νόμον, 5,33). The author states that reason guided Eleazar despite torture and the maddening waves of emotion and that his example strengthened others' loyalty to the law since he did not abolish (κατέλυσας) the holiness of which he spoke (7,9).

The remainder of 4 Maccabees relates the martyrdoms of seven brothers and their mother. Ironically, it is the machinations of Antiochus, not the laws, which are abolished. Through reason the Jews abolished his tyranny (8,15; 11,24), abolished the fear of tortures (14,8), abolished Antiochus's violence (17,2), and brought about Antiochus's own abolishment (11,25). These five occurrences of

¹⁰ J.W. VAN HENTEN, *The Maccabean Martyrs as Saviours of the Jewish People. A Study of 2 and 4 Maccabees* (JSJSup 57; Leiden 1997) 70-73. This increased frequency coincides with the argument of H.-J. KLAUCK (*4 Makkabäerbuch* [JSHRZ; Gütersloh 1989] 664-665) that the author is trying to persuade Jews not to assimilate to the wider culture.

κατάλυσις and καταλύω, along with the similar use previously mentioned in 4,24, counterpose the attempt to abolish the law and thus account for its frequent use in this sense. Both Eleazar and the mother with her seven sons demonstrated a commitment to law observance in the face of persecution. The author asserts that the tombs of the priest and the family should contain the following inscription: "Here are buried an old priest and old woman and seven sons because of the violence of the tyrant who wished to abolish the way of life of the Hebrews" (τὴν Εβραίων πολιτείαν καταλῦσαι θέλοντος, 17,9).

Josephus also links Jewish law abolishment to the Antiochan persecution¹¹. In his description of the conflicts between the Maccabees and those who supported Antiochus IV's reforms, he portrays the latter group admitting to Antiochus's son that they have abolished their ancestral customs (πάτριον αὐτῶν καταλύσαντας) and have adopted Antiochus's commands (*A.J.* 12.364). Further, in relating how Herod unlawfully appointed Aristobulus III high priest, Josephus states in *A.J.* 15.41 that "Antiochus Epiphanes had abolished (ἔλυσε τὸν νόμον) this law first when he removed Jesus and appointed his brother Onias". Finally, Josephus claims that Antiochus, "carried away by his ungovernable passions, . . . put pressure upon the Jews to abolish their ancestral customs, leaving their infants uncircumcised and sacrificing swine upon the altar" (ἡνάγκαζεν Ἰουδαίους καταλύσαντας τὰ πατρία βρέφη τε αὐτῶν φυλάττειν ἀπερίμητα καὶ οὖς ἐπιθύειν τῷ βωμῷ, *B.J.* 1.34).

2 Maccabees, 4 Maccabees, and Josephus (both in *Antiquities* and *War*) all link their accounts of the Antiochan persecution to an abolishment of the law. We have, therefore, twelve occurrences of καταλύω, λύω, and κατάλυσις in four accounts of the Antiochan persecution. It is unlikely that this cluster of occurrences is a coincidence; instead, it appears that there existed a common tradition linking the Antiochan persecution to a prior law abolishment by Jews and that one of the preferred words for describing their behaviour was (κατα)λύω.

¹¹ Josephus is dependent upon 1 Maccabees, which has already linked Jewish law abolishment to the Antiochan persecution, although 1 Maccabees does not use the word (κατα)λύω. Cf. I.M. GAFNI, "Josephus and 1 Maccabees", *Josephus, the Bible, and History* (eds. L.H. FELDMAN – G. HATA) (Detroit, MI 1989) 116-131. Since 1 Maccabees contains no occurrences of (κατα)λύω/κατάλυσις, its use here presumably comes from Josephus himself.

While 2 Maccabees was written in Judea between 124 and 63 B.C.E.¹², 4 Maccabees¹³ and Josephus's works were written in the latter half of the first century C.E., in the Jewish diaspora, demonstrating a geographically and temporally widespread tradition linking a prior Jewish abolishment of the law with the Antiochan persecution. These writers view this attack on circumcision, Sabbath, Temple cult, and food laws as an attack on the Jewish or Hebrew πολιτεία, and upon Jewish ancestral customs. It is important to note that, according to each of these three authors, it was a Jewish group that was closely involved in the abolishment of the Jewish law in an attempt at Hellenization (2 Macc 4,7-15; 4 Macc 4,15-21; *A.J.* 12.240-256; 12.362-66 [cf. also 1 Macc 1,11-15])¹⁴. Divine wrath, in the form of the persecution, was the consequence of this law abolishment.

II. The Zealots of Josephus's *Jewish War*

We turn now to the second event around which the words καταλύω, λύω, and κατάλυσις cluster: the Jewish Revolt as Josephus describes it in the *Jewish War*. On the brink of the revolt, Josephus pauses to recount Agrippa's speech to the people in which he counsels against going to war:

¹² Cf. VAN HENTEN, *Maccabean Martyrs*, 50-56; J.A. GOLDSTEIN, *I Maccabees* (AB 41; Garden City, N.Y. 1976) 62-64. Since the work reflects a positive opinion of the Romans (4,1; 8,10.36; 11,34-38), it is unlikely that it was written after Pompey's interference in Jewish affairs in 63 B.C.E.

¹³ Cf. J.W. VAN HENTEN ("Datierung und Herkunft des Vierten Makkabäerbuches", *Tradition and Re-Interpretation in Jewish and Early Christian Literature*. Essays in Honour of J.C.H. Lebram [eds. J.W. VAN HENTEN et al.] [SPB 56; Leiden 1986] 136-149), who places it in Asia Minor around 100 C.E.

¹⁴ E. BICKERMAN (*The God of the Maccabees: Studies on the Meaning and Origin of the Maccabean Revolt* [SJLA 32; Leiden 1979]) has made a strong case for the historicity of these accounts, though J. SCURLOCK ("167 BCE: Hellenism or Reform?", *JSJ* 31:2 [2000] 125-161), amongst others, provides an alternative account placing the primary blame on Antiochus IV. As BICKERMAN (*Maccabees*, 89-90) notes, Antiochus's knowledge of specific Jewish practices to attack demonstrates collusion with those who were familiar with Judaism, most likely Jewish people. Whether Bickerman's historical reconstruction is correct or not, this is precisely how these early sources, and most likely many Jewish people familiar with such works, viewed the Antiochan persecution.

Consider, too, the difficulty of preserving your religious rules from contamination, even were you engaging a less formidable foe; and how, if compelled to transgress the very principles on which you chiefly build your hopes of God's assistance, you will alienate Him from you. If you observe your sabbath customs and refuse to take any action on that day, you will undoubtedly be easily defeated, as were your forefathers by Pompey, when the besieged remained inactive; if, on the contrary, you transgress the law of your ancestors, I fail to see what further object you will have for hostilities, since your one aim is to preserve inviolate all the institutions of your fathers (γὰρ ὑμῖν μία τὸ μὴ τῶν πατρίων τι καταλύσαι). How could you invoke the aid of the Deity, after deliberately omitting to pay Him the service which you owe Him? (*B.J.* 2.391-93)

Agrippa states that while the people are considering rebellion because they do not want to abolish their ancestral customs, by going to war they will cease Sabbath observance in order to fight, thereby alienating themselves from God. Throughout his account of the subsequent revolt, Josephus demonstrates the ways in which the Zealots were guilty of this law abolishment and therefore caused the destruction of both the city and the Temple. This connection between Zealot law abolishment and divine wrath is made evident by the numerous occurrences of καταλύω, λύω, and κατάλυσις referring specifically to the actions of the Zealots among the divided populace of Jerusalem during the war.

First, the Zealots choose a high priest by lot, a procedure which, according to Josephus, is an abrogation (κατάλυσις) of the established practice (*B.J.* 4.154). As a result, many of the priests bemoan this event, considering it to be the abolition of the priestly honours (κατάλυσις, *B.J.* 4.157). Further, John of Gischala tells the Zealots that they would face the wrath of the people because they have abolished their laws and law courts (ὑπὲρ καταλύσεως νόμων καὶ δικαστηρίων, *B.J.* 4.223). Similarly, Jesus the high priest addresses the Idumaeans in an attempt to gain their support against the Zealots: "Join us in extirpating these tyrants, who have abolished (καταλύσαντας) our tribunals, trampled our laws" (*B.J.* 4.258). One Zealot even remorsefully confesses that both the Idumaeans and Zealots are guilty because they have "abolished the institutions of their forefathers" (καταλύουσι τὰ πάτρια, *B.J.* 4.348). Finally, according to Josephus, the Zealots leave the dead unburied: "The Zealots, however, carried barbarity so far as to grant

interment to none, whether slain within the city or on the roads; but, as though they had covenanted to annul the laws of nature along with those of their country (ἀλλὰ καθάπερ συνθήκας πεποιημένοι τοῖς τῆς πατρίδος συγκαταλῦσαι καὶ τοὺς τῆς φύσεως νόμους), and to their outrages upon humanity to add pollution of Heaven itself, they left the dead putrefying in the sun" (*B.J.* 4.381-382). Josephus's account of the revolt repeatedly portrays the Zealots in the act of abolishing the Jewish Law. Accordingly, Josephus states that "it is the Romans who may well be found to have been the upholders of our laws, while the laws' enemies, that is, the Zealots, were within the walls" (*B.J.* 4.184).

While these various abolishments are evidence of the lawlessness of the Zealots, it is one action in particular, the Zealot occupation and subsequent pollution of the Temple precincts, that Josephus believes was the cause of the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple. In speaking of this occupation of the Temple, he says: "[T]hey would surely have proceeded to greater heights, had aught greater than the sanctuary remained for them to abolish" (εἴ τι τῶν ἁγίων καταλῦσαι μείζον εἶχον, *B.J.* 4.171). It was a direct result of the Zealot occupation and defilement of the Temple that God's punishment came upon the entire nation. As Josephus concludes:

Every human ordinance was trampled under foot, every dictate of religion ridiculed by these men, who scoffed at the oracles of the prophets as imposters' fables, ... by the transgression of which the Zealots brought upon their country the fulfillment of the prophecies directed against it. For there was an ancient saying of inspired men that the city would be taken and the sanctuary burnt to the ground by right of war, whensoever it should be visited by sedition and native hands should be the first to defile God's sacred precincts (*B.J.* 4.388).

Elsewhere, Josephus makes a similar remark stressing the way in which the Romans demonstrated respect for the Temple precincts, even though some Jewish people entered the holy places, "with hands yet hot from the blood of their countrymen" (*B.J.* 4.183).

For Josephus, the rebels were abolishers of the law, as seen most acutely in the Zealots' assaults on the Temple precinct and cult. And, as Agrippa had warned immediately prior to the outbreak of the revolt, because they abolished the law, God abandoned them and brought upon them and the rest of the nation the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple. Again, the pattern is confirmed that those

who abolish the law bring divine judgment upon the people as a whole. Eight times Josephus uses καταλύω, λύω, or κατάλυσις to describe the actions of the Zealots during the Jewish Revolt, demonstrating that he believes the horrific events of 70 C.E. were the direct result of the law-abolishing Zealots. Josephus does his best to distance the Jewish people from the “bandits”, “rebels”, and “Zealots”, so that he can maintain their innocence in the rebellion¹⁵. His use of (κατα)λύω exclusively for the Zealots’ actions during the revolt demonstrates that it is the transgressions of the Zealots in particular which are blamed.

III. Matthew 5,17-20 and Accusations against Matthew’s Community

We turn now to the threefold occurrence of (κατα)λύω in Matt 5,17-20. Is Jesus guilty of abolishing the law? Presumably this was no academic question but a response to the charge that he was a law abolisher¹⁶, leveled perhaps by certain scribes or Pharisees as suggested by Jesus’ dismissive reference to their righteousness in 5,20 as well as by their antagonistic presence throughout Matthew’s Gospel¹⁷. Considering the above rehearsal of law abolishment in Jewish history, the dangerous nature of this charge becomes apparent; the consistent emphasis on the Hellenizers of 167 B.C.E. as law abolishers whose actions provoked the Antiochan persecution may stand behind such an accusation. Consequently, such a charge could be deployed in the following way: “Join with us against the law-

¹⁵ M. GOODMAN, *The Ruling Class of Judaea* (Cambridge 1987) 199, argues that Josephus is providing a scapegoat for the divine hostility evidenced in the destruction, while M. BOHRMANN, *Flavius Josephus, The Zealots and Yavne*. Towards a Rereading of The War of the Jews (Bern 1989) 192-277, argues that Jewish moderates held the Zealots responsible for the destruction because of their lawless violence. Similarly, J. MARCUS, “The Jewish War and the *Sitz im Leben* of Mark”, *JBL* 111.3 (1992) 441-462, has argued that Mark 11,17 and 13,14 refer to the Zealot occupation of the Temple, and that Mark partially attributes God’s judgment on Jerusalem to this action.

¹⁶ Matt 5,17.19.20 have no parallels in Mark or Luke. Verse 18 has parallels in Luke 16,17 and 21,33 which lack λύω, leading most scholars to attribute the verse to Q. For analysis of Matthew’s redactional activity in this pericope, see MEIER, *Law and History*, 41-115.

¹⁷ Cf. KONRADT, “Die vollkommene Erfüllung”, 404.

abolishing followers of this law-abolishing Jesus so that we might guard ourselves against God's wrath, which led to the persecution under Antiochus IV".

On the other hand, in the aftermath of the events of 70 C.E., it appears that certain Jewish groups accused one another of being the cause of the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple. We have seen that Josephus, one of Matthew's contemporaries, accuses his ideological rivals, the Zealots, of being law abolishers who brought about God's judgment upon all of the Jewish people. Was the early Christian movement also the object of such accusations? Matt 5,17-20 seems to suggest that it indeed was and that throughout his gospel, but most vehemently in these verses, Matthew is answering this charge.¹⁸ Given the probability that the air was rife with the accusations of various Jewish groups against their rivals in the wake of the devastating results of the revolt, this seems a distinct possibility¹⁹. This interpretation provides a strong connection to the preceding material in Matthew 5, since it could be argued that the persecution, reviling, and slandering that Matthew believes his community to be enduring, and to which he refers in 5,10-12, were accusations that they were law-abolishers who were responsible for the Temple's destruction²⁰. In response, Matthew calls his readers in 5,13-16 to let their light shine so that others see their good works (i.e. their law observance) and praise God²¹.

¹⁸ Cf. W.D. DAVIES – D.C. ALLISON Jr., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The Gospel According to Saint Matthew* (Edinburgh 1991) I, 482, and D.A. HAGNER, *Matthew 1-13* (WBC 33A; Dallas, TX 1993) 104.

¹⁹ In contrast to R.H. GUNDRY, *Matthew: A Commentary on his Handbook for a Mixed Church under Persecution* (Grand Rapids, MI 1994) 599-609, and J. NOLLAND, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids, MI 2005) 17, who argue for a pre-70 dating for Matthew, the majority of interpreters place the composition of Matthew's gospel in the latter third of the first century C.E. This provenance better explains Matthew's use of Mark's gospel, as well as the apparent allusion to the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in Matt 22,7.

²⁰ These accusations should not be interpreted as malicious. It is entirely conceivable, as S. VON DOBBELER, "Auf der Grenze. Ethos und Identität der mathäischen Gemeinde nach Mt 15,1-20", *BZ* 45 (2001) 55-79 (63), argues, that those who accused Matthew's community of law abolishment did so out of deep concern for Israel's destiny.

²¹ DEINES, *Gerechtigkeit*, 137-181, believes that the Beatitudes, and 5,1-16 more broadly, signal the irrelevance of the Law, since Jesus speaks of people participating in the kingdom of heaven without any reference to Torah

Since Jesus did not come to abolish the law as Matthew makes clear in 5,17-19, the members of the Matthean community are supposed to live in a way that their opponents would not be able to bring such charges against them: "Matthew's position is that the whole Mosaic law must be observed (by Jewish Christians) until the eschaton has come in its fullness"²². The Sermon on the Mount indicates the strictness of the law observance required.

Moving to the offensive in 5,20, Matthew's Jesus levels his accusation against the scribes and Pharisees by calling into question their own righteousness. Matthew, similar to Qumranic claims that the Pharisees were seekers of smooth things²³, asserts that the followers of Jesus hold to a higher degree of righteousness than do the Pharisees. As J.A. Overman argues, "The nub of this contention is legal interpretation and piety or praxis. He believes the competing group distorts the law for their agenda and ends. His community, as a result of the interpretation provided for them through Jesus, is the group that should guide God's people in this place and time"²⁴. Consequently, Matthew counters claims that the Jesus

observance. Yet 5,16 appears to undermine this interpretation and in fact leads quite nicely into 5,17-20's explicit emphasis upon the law.

²² VIVIANO, *Matthew and His World*, 237. Cf. Daniel MARGUERAT, "Pas un iota ne passera de la loi ... (Mt 5,18). La loi dans l'évangile de Matthieu", *La Loi dans l'un et l'autre Testament* (ed. C. FOCANT) (LD 168; Paris 1997) 149-174.

²³ Cf. CD 1.14-2.1; *The Thanksgiving Psalms* 10.31-38; 12.9-11; 4Q177; 4Q163 fragment 23 2.10-13; 4Q169 fragments 2-4, and in contrast to the claims of Josephus (cf. *B.J.* 1.110; 2.162; *Vita* 191; *A.J.* 17.41) and Luke's Paul (Acts 22,3; 26,5), who describe the Pharisees as "precise" (ἀκριβεία) in their interpretation of the law. On these references to the Pharisees in Qumran literature, see, most recently, J.C. VANDERKAM, "The Pharisees and the Dead Sea Scrolls", *In Quest of the Historical Pharisees* (eds. J. NEUSNER – B.D. CHILTON) (Waco, TX 2007) 225-236, 459-462. If this identification is incorrect, it would not take away from Matthew's criticism that the Pharisees' ethical righteousness is insufficient, since B. PRZYBYLSKI, *Righteousness in Matthew and His World of Thought* (SNTSMS 41; Cambridge 1980), has demonstrated that the word δικαιοσύνη in Matthew always refers to ethical righteousness, not forensic righteousness.

²⁴ J.A. OVERMAN, "Problems with Pluralism in Second Temple Judaism: Matthew, James, and the Didache in Their Jewish-Roman Milieu", *Matthew, James, and Didache. Three Related Documents in Their Jewish and Christian Settings* (eds. H. VAN DE SANDT – J.K. ZANGENBERG) (SBLSymS 45; Atlanta, GA 2008) 259-270 (263).

movement brought about the destruction of the Temple and God's wrath by pointing out the Pharisees' law-keeping inadequacies ²⁵.

As we have seen, Josephus blamed the events of 70 C.E. on the Zealots whom he repeatedly accused of abolishing the law, demonstrating the possibility that others laid the blame on Jewish followers of Jesus, whom they viewed as law abolishers ²⁶. It is conceivable that a group competing for the loyalties of other Jews, such as the Pharisees, argued that Jesus came to abolish the law and that his movement was the cause of the destruction of Jerusalem. What better way to discredit them as contenders for a leading role in the post-70 Jewish community than to claim that Jesus himself was a law abolisher? Matthew's gospel should therefore be understood, in part, as a response to such charges.

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I have argued that the threefold occurrence of the verbs καταλύω and λύω in Matt 5,17-20 is evidence of an accusation leveled at Jesus and the Jewish community that followed him. It has been seen that there is a high density of occurrences of these words in two locations — accounts of the Antiochan persecution, and Josephus's account of the Zealots in the *Jewish War*. Matthew 5,17-20 should, therefore, be read against the backdrop of these two verbal clusters. In these verses, Matthew answers the dangerous accusation that his community members are law abolishers and consequently a threat to all Jews. Just as the authors of 2 and 4 Maccabees believed that the Jewish Hellenizers brought about the Antiochan persecution, and just as Josephus argued that the law-abolishing Zealots brought about the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem, so, too, some may have argued that Jewish-Christian abandonment of ancestral customs occasioned divine wrath. If so, the correct response of other Jewish groups to Matthew's community should conform to Moses' command, as mentioned by Jose-

²⁵ Cf. D.M. MOFFITT, "Righteous Bloodshed, Matthew's Passion Narrative and the Temple's Destruction: Lamentations as a Matthean Intertext", *JBL* 125.2 (2006) 299-320.

²⁶ Possible confirmation for this suggestion can be found in Josephus's claim that the high priest Ananus put James, the brother of Jesus, and some of his companions to death on the accusation that they were law transgressors (παράνομησάντοι, *A.J.* 20.200).

phus in *A.J.* 4.310, to resist and uproot, if possible, those who attempt to abolish the constitution (καταλύειν... πολιτεῖαν). The Gospel of Matthew consistently works against this understanding of Jesus; instead, Jesus is a new Moses who comes to enable faithful Torah observance²⁷. As P.J. Hartin argues, “Matthew’s Jesus does not take issue with the Torah as such, for the Torah is God’s expressed will. Instead, Matthew’s Jesus claims the role as official interpreter of God’s will, of God’s Torah”²⁸. The controversies with the scribes and the Pharisees provide Matthew with a platform to demonstrate that while Jesus’ Halakhah may have differed from that of the Pharisees, he (and his followers) still faithfully observed the law²⁹. It is in Matt 5,17-20 and the subsequent Matthean Antitheses in 5,21-48³⁰ that Matthew makes this claim most emphatically on behalf of and in defense of both Jesus and his law-observant Jewish followers.

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SUMMARY

Three times within Matt 5,17-20 passage Matthew uses the verb (κατα)λύω, signaling its importance. Consequently, I will focus on two historical events around which these words cluster: the Antiochan persecution

²⁷ See D.C. ALLISON Jr., *The New Moses. A Matthean Typology* (Edinburgh 1993).

²⁸ P.J. HARTIN, “Ethics in the Letter of James, the Gospel of Matthew, and the Didache: Their Place in Early Christian Literature”, *Matthew, James, and Didache. Three Related Documents in Their Jewish and Christian Settings* (eds. H. VAN DE SANDT – J.K. ZANGENBERG) (SBLSymS 45; Atlanta, GA 2008) 289-314 (294).

²⁹ Cf. SALDARINI, *Matthew’s Christian-Jewish Community*, 44-67, 124-164; OVERMAN, *Matthew’s Gospel*, 16-30.

³⁰ For this interpretation of the Matthean Antitheses, see, most recently, P. WICK, “Die Antithesen der Bergpredigt als paränetische Rhetorik: Durch scheinbaren Widerspruch zu einem neuen Verständnis”, *Judaica* 52 (1996) 156-178; H.D. BETZ, “Die hermeneutischen Prinzipien in der Bergpredigt (Mt 5,17-20)”, *Gesammelte Aufsätze* (Tübingen 1992) II, 111-126; and E. CUVILLIER, “Torah Observance and Radicalization in the First Gospel. Matthew and First-Century Judaism: A Contribution to the Debate”, *NTS* 55 (2009) 144-159 (148).

and the destruction of the Temple. Since Jewish literature characterizes the Hellenizers of the Maccabean period as law abolishers, labeling a group as such implicated it in endangering the nation. As Josephus' *Jewish War* demonstrates, after the Jewish Revolt, law abolishers were blamed for the Temple's destruction. Thus, Matthew addresses the charge that Jesus abolished the law and, in so doing, brought about the destruction of the Temple.

“Sealed” with the Holy Spirit (Eph 1,13-14) and Circumcision *

In whom you also, after hearing the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom also after believing you were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, which is an earnest of our inheritance unto the redemption of the possession, for the praise of his glory (Eph 1,13-14)¹.

What does it mean to be “sealed with the promised Holy Spirit” in Eph 1,13-14? Chrysostom and Erasmus suggested the following:

The Israelites also were sealed, but that was by circumcision, like the brutes and reasonless creatures. We too are sealed, but it is as sons, ‘with the Spirit’².

A little bit of cut-off foreskin is a sign by which you may distinguish a Jew from a Gentile. But the Gospel’s sign extends further and is impressed not upon the body but on the spirit. By it in equal degree are sealed all the people of any nation who embrace the Gospel teaching and believe the Gospel’s promises³.

These statements, though clouded by later anti-Jewish sentiment, serve as a helpful entry point to the exegesis of Eph 1,13-14. For both Chrysostom and Erasmus, “sealed” is a parody of circumcision that declares the Christian experience of receiving the Holy Spirit superior. Both writers reach this conclusion because, aside from other intellectual and social factors, the rabbinic literature makes clear that “seal” was a common metaphoric description of circumcision by Jews themselves. Thus, Chrysostom and Erasmus interpret Eph 1,13’s “sealed” according to the way Jews in their own time used “sealed”.

* Many thanks to Dale Allison, Edith Humphrey, and my wife, Liberty Ferda, for their feedback on an earlier version of this article.

¹ Translations from the New Testament, Septuagint, and Hebrew Bible are my own unless otherwise indicated.

² J. CHRYSOSTOM, *Hom. Eph.* 2.1.11-14 (NPNF¹ 13,56).

³ D. ERASMUS, *Paraphrase on the Epistle to the Ephesians* (ed. R.D. SIDER, trans. M. O’MARA – E.A. PHILLIPS) (Collected Works of Erasmus 43; Toronto – Buffalo, NY – London 2009) 309.

This article suggests that for the original audience(s) of Ephesians “sealed” would also have brought circumcision to mind, though the implication for them was (of course) less conditioned by centuries of Christian/Jewish identity construction, and was not necessarily polemical⁴. The possibility that Eph 1,13’s “sealed” evokes circumcision has received passing remarks in some commentaries, and nowhere been given sustained attention⁵. Most modern studies of Eph 1,13-14 are instead interested in reconstructing the particular experience in Christian life (e.g. baptism, confirmation, charismatic gifts, etc.) that the sealing metaphor describes. This article attempts to refocus the discussion and suggest that, regardless of which rite or experience “sealed” refers to, the author of Ephesians here invests that rite or experience with theological significance commonly attached to circumcision.

Thus, the thesis offered here is that the author of Ephesians calls upon the experience of the Holy Spirit among his predominantly Gentile audience (vv. 13-14) to mark them out as members of God’s “possession”, and, in so doing, makes the reception of the Holy Spirit, instead of circumcision, the key identity marker of those who live “in the fullness of time” (v. 10)⁶. Here in vv. 13-14 the function of cir-

⁴ Parodic use of “seal” in Ephesians 1 would be a worthwhile investigation but is beyond the scope of this article. Literary critic S. DENTITH, *Parody* (London – New York, NY 2000) 9, describes parody as “any cultural practice which provides a relatively polemical allusive imitation of another cultural production or practice”.

⁵ Some briefly discuss the interpretation as a possibility: e.g., T.O. WEDEL, *The Epistle to the Ephesians* (IB 10; New York, NY – Nashville, TN 1953) 623; N. HUGEDE, *L’Épître aux Éphésiens* (Genève 1973) 42-43, n. 128; F.F. BRUCE, *The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians* (NICNT 18; Grand Rapids, MI 1984) 265; J.N. ALETTI, *Saint Paul: Épître aux Éphésiens*. Introduction, Traduction et Commentaire (EB 42; Paris 2001) 79-81. Others reject it: e.g., T.K. ABBOTT, *Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians* (ICC 39; Edinburgh 1897) 22; M. BARTH, *Ephesians*. Introduction, Translation, and Commentary on Chapters 1-3 (AB 34; Garden City, NY 1974) 136; A.T. LINCOLN, *Ephesians* (WBC 42; Nashville, TN 1982) 40. And some do not mention it at all: e.g., W.F. TAYLOR, *Ephesians* (ACNT 10; Minneapolis, MN 1980) 37; M.Y. MACDONALD, *Colossians and Ephesians* (SP 17; Collegeville, MN 1991) 204-205; F. THIELMAN, *Ephesians* (BECNT 10; Grand Rapids, MI 2010) 80-83.

⁶ I will refer to the author of Ephesians hereafter as AE and will not take up the debate about authorship. The argument of his essay does not depend

cumcision to guarantee "inheritance" and future "redemption" as God's "possession" (v. 14) shares a certain "family resemblance" with the function of AE's "sealed with the promised Holy Spirit", particularly in the position of both as a final step in attaining membership ⁷.

The argument proceeds in three steps. First a brief survey of the history of interpretation to suggest we refocus on the theological logic of the verses. Then a discussion of the syntax and context of vv. 13-14 and an exploration of the presupposition that reception of the Spirit in the past (v. 13) guarantees one "inheritance" and "redemption" in the future (v. 14). Lastly, five concluding observations drawn from Ephesians, Paul's corpus, and sociological theory that suggest "sealed" in Eph 1,13-14 evokes circumcision.

I. History of Interpretation

The history of interpretation of what AE means by ἐσφραγίσθητε includes four stories.

The most popular and most probable suggestion is *baptism* ⁸. Key arguments include the use of "seal" for baptism in the second cen-

on whether or not Ephesians goes back to Paul himself. Furthermore, I will use at times "the Ephesians" to refer to the recipients of the letter, though I do not assume that the letter was initially addressed to Ephesus alone. See R.P. MARTIN, "An Epistle in Search of a Life-Setting", *ExpTim* 79 (1968) 296-302; E. BEST, "Recipients and Title of the Letter to the Ephesians: Why and When the Designation 'Ephesians'?" *ANRW* 2.25.4 (1987) 3247-3279.

⁷ For discussion of Wittgensteinian "family resemblance" and its importance for comparative study, see R.A. McDERMOTT, "Religion Game: Some Family Resemblances", *JAAR* 38 (1970) 390-400.

⁸ Ambrosiaster, *Comm. Eph.* (on 1,13) in *Commentary on Ephesians* (trans. G.L. BRAY) (ACT; Downers Grove, IL 2009) 37, says that "as a sign of their (the Gentiles) redemption and future inheritance they have the Holy Spirit given to them after baptism". See the close connection between Spirit reception and baptism in Cyprian, *Ep.* 73.7 (*ANF* 5.388); G. Nazianzus, *Or.* 40.8 in *Festal Orations: St. Gregory of Nazianzus* (trans. N.V. HARRISON) (Crestwood, NY 2008) 104. G.W.H. LAMPE, *The Seal of the Spirit* (London 1951) 165, also 4-5, argues that the relationship between baptism and sealing is "so close that the one can be regarded as the thing signified by the other". J.C. KIRBY, *Ephesians, Baptism and Pentecost* (London 1968) 150-154, includes Eph 1,13-14 in a section entitled "Direct References to Baptism". HUGEDÉ, *L'Épître aux Éphésiens*, 42, says "c'est certain" that the seal refers

tury CE (2 *Clem.* 7.6; 8.6; *Herm. Sim.* 8.6; 9.16; *Acts Paul* 25; *Ps.-Clem.* 6.8)⁹, the frequency of baptismal motifs in Ephesians (2,4-6; 4,4-6.22-24; 5,14.26)¹⁰, and the close linkage between water baptism and reception of the Spirit in other New Testament writings¹¹.

A second reading takes "sealed" to refer to confirmation which either precedes or follows baptism. This can be the laying on of hands or anointing with oil¹². The earliest connections between "seal" and confirmatory acts are found in the *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus, the *Apostolic Constitutions*, and the writings of Novatian¹³.

A third option is that "sealed" means "empowered by" the Holy Spirit¹⁴. Here the focus is not a particular rite (baptism, confirma-

to baptism. See also D. MOLLATT, "Symbolismes baptismaux chez saint Paul", *LumVie* 26 (1956) 205-228; R.C.H. LENSKE, *The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Galatians, to the Ephesians, and to the Philippians* (Minneapolis, MN 1961) 383; J. GNILKA, *Der Epheserbrief* (Freiburg 1971) 85; J. ERNST, *Die Briefe an die Philipper, an Philemon, an die Kolosser, an die Epheser* (Regensburg 1974) 280-281; BARTH, *Ephesians*, 95; MACDONALD, *Colossians and Ephesians*, 212-213. G.R. BEASLEY-MURRAY, *Baptism in the New Testament* (London 1962) 174, 177, concludes that seal refers to the pronouncement of Jesus' name during baptism.

⁹ For the use of "seal" for baptism in Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian, see *A Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs* (ed. D.W. BERCOT) (Peabody, MA 1988) 50-56.

¹⁰ J. COUTTS, "Ephesians 1.3-14 and I Peter 1.3-12", *NTS* 3 (1956-57) 115-127, esp. 125, argues the *berakah* (vv. 3-14) was a baptismal hymn, and N. DAHL, "Adresse und Proömium des Epheserbriefes", *TZ* 7 (1951) 241-64, esp. 261-264, argues that Ephesians was written to teach Gentile converts about baptism.

¹¹ R.P. MARTIN, "Patterns of Worship in New Testament Churches", *JSNT* 37 (1989) 71; D.J. MOO, *The Epistle to the Romans* (NICNT; Grand Rapids, MI 1996) 366.

¹² There is mention of anointing with oil in Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catech.* 20.3 (*NPNF*² 7,147), and Basil, *Spir. Sanct.* 27.66 (*NPNF*² 8,41-42) claims that placing the sign of the cross on the forehead was started by the apostles themselves.

¹³ Hippolytus, *Trad. ap.* 20.8; 22.3 in *Treatise on the Apostolic Tradition of St Hippolytus of Rome* (ed. G. DIX) (London - Ridgefield, CT 1992) 32, 39; Anonym., *Con. ap.* 7.22 (*ANF* 7,469); Novatian, *Trin.* 29.16 (*FC* 67,102).

¹⁴ Didymus the Blind, *Spir. Sanct.* 20 (*ACCS* 8,118) claims that "One who takes on discipline and virtue receives in his own character the seal". For Origen, to be sealed means to gain "clarification and explanation" on spiritual matters, and Jerome believes the seal makes the believer possess "His (the Holy Spirit's) brightness and image and grace". See HEINE, *The Commem-*

tion, etc.), but rather the work of the Holy Spirit on the character of the believer (e.g., righteous behavior, robust faith in God, charismatic gifts, etc.)¹⁵.

Lastly, under the influence of Harnack and the *Religions-geschichtliche Schule*, some have understood "seal" to refer to magical protection¹⁶. "Seals" were used in the magical and secretive rites of the mystery religions rampant in Asia Minor¹⁷.

Problems with each of the four options make it difficult to settle on one of them as the most probable¹⁸. Briefly:

- (i) There is early attestation for the baptism-seal connection in the second century CE; but in one of the earliest witnesses, the *Shepherd of Hermas*, the author has to clarify that "the seal is the water", which suggests the making known of something previously unknown¹⁹. In addition, the often noted "link" between Spirit baptism and water baptism is neither stable nor consistent in the New Testament²⁰. The diverse opinions con-

taries of Origen and Jerome on St Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, 103. Cf. Ambrose, *Virg.1* (NPNF² 9,48). The seal refers to confident faith in God (probably reading Eph 1,13-14 through the lens of John 3,33) according to ERASMUS, *Paraphrase on Ephesians*, 43; M. LUTHER, *Sermons on the Gospel of St. John*. Chapters 1-4 (trans. M.H. BERTRAM) (Luther's Works 22; Saint Louis, MO 1957) 309; J. CALVIN, *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul to the Galatians and Ephesians* (trans. W. PRINGLE) (Calvin's Commentaries 21; Grand Rapids, MI 2009) 208.

¹⁵ Cf. G. SMEATON, *The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Carlisle, PA 1974 [orig. 1882]) 79; P.W. EVANS, "Sealing as a Term for Baptism", *Baptist Quarterly* 16 (1955) 171-175; J.D.G. DUNN, *Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Edinburgh 1998) 452-453.

¹⁶ A. HARNACK, *History of Dogma* (trans. N. BUCHANAN) (Gloucester 1976 [orig. 1886]) I, 209, n. 1, thought the expression "arose from the language of the mysteries". Cf. M. DIBELIUS, *An die Kolosser, Epheser. An Philemon* (Tübingen 1953) 62; E. BEST, *Commentary on Ephesians* (ICC; Edinburgh 1998) 150; R. THOMAS, "The Seal of the Spirit and the Religious Climate of Ephesus", *RestQ* 43 (2001) 155-166.

¹⁷ Cf. B.M. METZGER, "St. Paul and the Magicians", *PSB* 38 (1944) 27-30.

¹⁸ Other skeptics include LINCOLN, *Ephesians*, 40; J.D.G. DUNN, *Romans 1-8* (WBC 38a; Nashville, TN 1988) 209; R. SCHNACKENBURG, *Ephesians. A Commentary* (Edinburgh 1991) 65-66; D. AUNE, *Revelation 6-16* (WBC 52b; Nashville, TN 1998) 459.

¹⁹ A point made by AUNE, *Revelation 6-16*, 459.

²⁰ Compare Acts 2,38; 8,16-17; 19,6. There is no evidence to support the claim that those who were baptized had already received the Spirit. See BEST,

cerning when and how the Holy Spirit came upon the believer show that Christian experience complexified rather than clarified the issue ²¹.

- (ii) We know little to nothing of confirmatory activities in the New Testament period; all the summoned evidence is late and has to be read back into the New Testament.
- (iii) Nowhere in early Christian literature is moral transformation or growing in faith described with the sense of finality one finds in Eph 1,13-14, and nowhere is the exercise of spiritual gifts called a “seal”.
- (iv) Without creating a false dichotomy between Judaism and Hellenism, we can see that the literary context of Ephesians (vv. 3-14) is rife with language from the Jewish scriptures (e.g., election, the beloved, redemption, forgiveness of sins, inheritance) and not from the pagan mysteries.

This brief survey suffices to show that, if indeed “sealed” brought to mind a particular Christian ritual or experience for the first hearers of Ephesians, the evidence no longer allows us open access to it. There is still a way forward, however: such reconstructions should not distract from the theological point being made in vv. 13-14 regardless of whether “sealed” speaks of baptism, confirmation, character renewal, or magical protection. The thrust of the text, rather, is to highlight the role of the Holy Spirit in becoming an earnest for the future. The exegesis of this passage is best refocused, therefore, on the way in which AE encourages his hearers to understand their encounter with the Holy Spirit, rather than to decide what that ritual or experience actually was. The following explores the logic and origin of the assumption that Spirit-sealing (v. 13) is the basis of and evidence for future inheritance and redemption (v. 14), beginning with syntax and context.

Commentary on Ephesians, 150; N. DAHL, “The Concept of Baptism in Ephesians”, *Studies in Ephesians* (WUNT 131; Tübingen 2000) 425.

²¹ Some claim that reception of the Spirit is synonymous with baptism. See the views of Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria and others in *A Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs* (ed. D.W. BERCOT) 50-59. Others claim that the Spirit is given either before (*Acts Thom.* 27) or after baptism and distinct from it. For example, Tertullian, *Bapt.* 6 (*ANF* 3,672) says explicitly, “It is not that in the waters we obtain the Holy Spirit. Rather, in the water, under the angel, we are cleansed and prepared for the Holy Spirit”. See also anonym., *Rebapt.* 10 (*ANF* 5,672-73); Origen, *Hom. Lev.* 6.5.2 (*FC* 83,125-126); Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catech.* 3.3 (*NPNF*² 7,14-15); Hilary of Poitiers, *Comm. Ps.* 64.15 (*PL* 9,421).

II. Syntax, Context, and Logic of Eph 1,13-14

Exegetes since Tertullian have disputed the significance of the pronoun change from “we” to “you” in verse 13. Does the change simply distinguish between the senders (“we”) and the recipients (“you”)²², or does it highlight an ethnic distinction between Jews and Gentiles²³? Tertullian took “we who were the first to have hoped in the Christ” (v. 12) to refer to *Jews* expecting the Messiah, and then (v. 13) “(Paul draws) a distinction with respect to the Gentiles”²⁴. For Tertullian the pronoun shift demonstrated, *contra* Marcion, that both Jews (“we”) and Gentiles/Christians (“you”) shared the same God. Tertullian’s claim that vv. 13-14 focus on Gentile readers in particular is correct and supported by the following: (i) verses 13-14 detail the initial acceptance of the gospel and the “conversion-initiation” of the Ephesians, and later in the epistle AE specifies that “you Gentiles” (ὁμεῖς τὰ ἔθνη, 2,11) were “formerly far off”²⁵; (ii) the assurance of future “inheritance” (from κληρονομία) and of being God’s “possession” (v. 14) evokes τό μυστήριον that AE proclaims (3,1-3) that “the Gentiles are co-heirs (συγκληρονόμα), members of the same body and sharers of the promise” (3,6); (iii) a similar pronoun change from “we” to “you” occurs at the end of Chapter 2: “both of us have access in one Spirit to the Father” (2,18) and then “you also (καὶ ὁμεῖς) are built into a residence of God by the Spirit” (2,22). AE specifies in the next

²² For this view see CALVIN, *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul to the Galatians and Ephesians*, 207; BEST, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Ephesians*, 145, 148; E. WOODCOCK, “The Seal of the Holy Spirit”, *BSac* 155 (1998) 157; THIELMAN, *Ephesians*, 78. R.A. WILSON, “‘We’ and ‘You’ in the Epistle to the Ephesians”, *SE II. Papers Presented to the Second International Congress on New Testament Studies held at Christ Church Oxford, 1961* (eds. F.M. CROSS – F. ZUCHER et al.) (Berlin 1964) 676-680, argues that the change to “you” intends to address the newly baptized in the audience.

²³ Cf. ERASMUS, *Paraphrase on Ephesians*, 308; J. WESLEY, *Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament* (New York 1857) 490; C. GORE, *St. Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians* (New York 1898) 71. DIBELIUS, *An die Kolosser, Epheser. An Philemon*, 62, says that the author here addresses “die heidnischen Leser”. Others who agree include BARTH, *Ephesians*, 92; A.S. WOOD, *Ephesians* (EBC 11; Grand Rapids, MI 1978) 26-27; BRUCE, *Ephesians*, 264; R.P. MARTIN, *Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon* (Interpretation; Atlanta, GA 1991) 19; MACDONALD, *Colossians and Ephesians*, 204.

²⁴ Tertullian, *Marc.* 5.17 (ANF 3,465).

²⁵ J.D.G. Dunn used “conversion-initiation” in his *Baptism in the Holy Spirit. A Re-Examination of the New Testament Teaching* (Philadelphia, PA 1970) 90.

verse (3,1) that the “you” (from 2,22) are Gentiles on behalf of whom Paul became a prisoner. In each of these three cases, AE draws an ethnic distinction via pronouns for the purpose of proclaiming the unity between Jew and Gentile accomplished “in Christ Jesus” (2,13-14). It can be regarded as probable, therefore, that the “you also” (καὶ ὑμεῖς) in 1,13 draws attention to Gentile ethnicity and looks forward to the exhortation for Jew/Gentile unity ²⁶.

After drawing in Gentile hearers with “you also”, AE recounts their “conversion-initiation” in an awkward sentence framed around two participles (ἀκούσαντες, πιστεύσαντες) and the main verb (ἐσφραγίσθητε) ²⁷. The aorists suggest that the hearing, believing, and being sealed occurred at a definite moment, which again implies that AE reflects on the initial reception of the gospel ²⁸. It is less clear, however, how to relate the participles to the main verb: are the “hearing” and “believing” antecedent to the “being sealed” or contemporaneous? In New Testament literature it is statistically accurate to say that the action expressed by an aorist participle “is generally antecedent” to the main verb (cf. e.g. Matt 4,2; 27,3.5; Mark 1,31; Col 1,3.4; Acts 17,31; Heb 1,3) ²⁹. But it is also true that the aorist participle can be contemporaneous, antecedent, or subsequent (rarely) to the main verb ³⁰. Thus one’s final decision needs to be made on contextual grounds ³¹.

²⁶ The suggestion here does not imply that the Ephesian audience(s) was exclusively Gentile, as one increasingly finds arguments in Ephesian scholarship for a Jewish Christian contingent in the original readership. Cf. e.g. J. MUDDIMAN, *The Epistle to the Ephesians* (London 2001) 16-17. A mixed congregation would only strengthen the thesis of this study (see below).

²⁷ D.P. EWALD, *Die Briefe des Paulus an die Epheser, Kolosser und Philemon* (Leipzig 1910) 86, says the syntax is “verfält”. See also the discussion in W.M.L. DE WETTE, *Kurze Erklärung der Briefe an die Colosser, an Philemon, an die Epheser und Philipper* (Leipzig 1847) 101.

²⁸ Cf. F. BLASS, *Grammar of New Testament Greek* (London 1911) 193.

²⁹ So H.W. SMYTH, *Greek Grammar* (Cambridge 1956) 420. See further e.g. H.E. DANA and J.R. MANTEY, *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament* (New York, NY 1927) 230. For exceptions see C.F.D. MOULE, *An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek* (Cambridge 1953) 100.

³⁰ Note E.D. BURTON, *Syntax of the Moods and Tenses in New Testament Greek* (Chicago, IL 1903) 61: “The Aorist Participle of Antecedent Action does not denote antecedence; it is used of antecedent action, where antecedence is implied, not by the Aorist tense as a tense of past time, but in some other way” (italics orig.). Cf. SMYTH, *Greek Grammar*; 419 (“[temporal connotation] depends on the context”); S.E. PORTER, *Verbal Aspect in the Greek of the New Testament, with Reference to Tense and Mood* (New York, NY 1989) 102-108.

³¹ *Contra* C.L. ROGERS JR. and C.L. ROGERS III, *The New Linguistic and*

I propose that the similarity here with other "missionary reports" in Acts and the uncontested Pauline letters suggests that the participles are either temporally or logically prior to the sealing³². (i) Acts provides no diagnostic model for "conversion", but there is a consistent progression from hearing the gospel, which causes conviction and repentance, to baptism and/or reception of the Holy Spirit (2,37; 8,26-38; 19,1-7; cf. Rom 10,14-17; Mark 16,16). (ii) In Galatians 3, Paul asks his readers if they received the Spirit ἐξ ἔργων νόμου or ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως (3,2.5). In this important parallel, which has the cognates of ἀκούειν and πιστεύειν in participial form in Eph 1,13, Paul forges a tight connection between ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως and receiving the Spirit, but the ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως is logically prior as the basis of the reception of the Spirit. (iii) In another epistle, Paul reminds the Thessalonians that the gospel message did not come "in word only" but "also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction" (1,5). The claim is thus that the "hearing" of the word and the experience of the Holy Spirit (see also 2,13) are not the same. In sum, then, since such "missionary reports" never indicate that hearing and believing are synonymous with reception of the Spirit, but instead suggest a progression that concludes with reception of the Spirit, it is probable that the "missionary report" of Eph 1,13-14 conveys a similar idea³³. It will be important in the discussion below that the Holy Spirit is understood to be the decisive factor in "conversion-initiation".

Exegetical Key to the Greek New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI 1998) 435.

³² On the similarity with "missionary reports", see H. SCHLIER, *Der Brief an die Epheser*, 69-70; MACDONALD, *Colossians and Ephesians*, 204. The grammatical argument here is *contra* LINCOLN, *Ephesians*, 39; J.D.G DUNN, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, 159; BEST, *Commentary on Ephesians*, 149.

³³ Many exegetes ancient and modern even understood the participles themselves as consecutive: e.g., hearing, then believing, then being sealed. Origen and Jerome, for example, claim that only those who hear *and* believe are sealed with the Spirit. See HEINE, *The Commentaries of Origen and Jerome on St Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians*, 102. Theodoret of Cyrus, *Comm. Eph.* 509 in *Theodoret of Cyrus: Commentary on the Letters of St. Paul* (trans. R.C. HILL) (Brookline, MA 2001) II, 35, assumes a similar logic, "You *not only* heard *but also* believed; hence you attained the grace of the all-holy Spirit" (my italics). Cf. J. EADIE, *A Commentary on the Greek Text of the Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians* (New York, NY²1861) 66; J.A. BENGEL, *Gnomon of the New Testament* (Edinburgh, 1866) IV, 69; EWALD, *Die Briefe des Paulus an die Epheser, Kolosser und Philemon*, 87; SCHLIER,

Turning now to the logic of Eph 1,13-14, we see, at core, a simple argument that has a premise, presents evidence, and draws a conclusion. The evidence is the experience of being sealed (v. 13), and the conclusion is that those sealed are guaranteed “inheritance” and “redemption” (v. 14). The premise, however, is not stated, and thus the logic of the connection between Spirit-sealing and “inheritance” and “redemption” is not immediately clear.

One finds in several of the uncontested Paulines and in Acts a similar *argumentum ab experientia* (Luther’s phrase) which seems to assume the same premise³⁴.

- (i) Paul says in Galatians, “And because you are sons (ὅτι δέ ἐστε υἱοί), God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts which cries out, ‘Abba, Father’! Therefore, no longer are you a slave but a son, and if a son, then also an heir through God” (Gal 4,6-7). The claim is that God gave the Spirit because the Galatians are legitimate sons through Christ, and heirs of Abraham’s promise (cf. 3,22; 3,26, “For all are sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus”). The premise of the statement, therefore, is that God’s sons have the Spirit, which allows Paul to argue that the latter (reception of the Spirit) is evidence for the former (the Galatians are sons of God).
- (ii) In the beginning of Paul’s discussion of the law and the promise in Galatians 3, he asks rhetorically, “Did you receive the Spirit ἐξ ἔργων νόμου or ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως;” (3,2). Paul shows why this question is important at the conclusion of his discussion of Abraham’s faith (vv. 6-14): “(Christ became the curse) in order that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, with the result that we might

Der Brief an die Epheser, 69; BARTH, *Ephesians*, 95. The notion is grammatically possible, as MOULE, *Idiom Book*, 102, notes that two participles can be used in one sentence with reference to two successive actions. So too, one might expect the hearing then believing succession if the link with other “missionary reports” is judged correct. But the point is not essential to my argument here.

³⁴ Cf. J.D.G. DUNN, *Jesus and the Spirit*. A Study of the Religious and Charismatic Experience of Jesus and the First Christians as Reflected in the New Testament (Philadelphia, PA 1975) 260; S. MCKNIGHT, “Covenant and Spirit: The Origins of the New Covenant Hermeneutic”, *The Holy Spirit and Christian Origins*. Essays in Honor of James D.G. Dunn (eds. G.N. STANTON – B.W. LONGENECKER – S.C. BARTON) (Grand Rapids, MI – Cambridge 2004) 51.

receive the promise of the Holy Spirit through faith" (3,14). Thus, the point of receiving the Spirit ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως is that the Galatians are recipients of "the blessing of Abraham" and recipients of "the promise" (v. 14). In other words, with the Spirit they are marked as God's people.

- (iii) Paul is straightforward enough in Romans 8: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God" (8,14). Paul later specifies that this received Spirit testifies that believers are "sons of God" (υἱοὶ θεοῦ) and therefore "heirs" (κληρονόμοι, vv. 16-17).
- (iv) In the beginning of 1 Thessalonians, Paul assures his hearers of their election by recalling that "our gospel did not come to you in word alone but also in power and in the Holy Spirit" (1,5). Though the terminology here is different from that found in Galatians and Romans, the idea is the same: the Thessalonians can be sure that they are elect because they experienced the Holy Spirit. Like "son" and "heir" and "child" in Galatians and Romans, "election" is a term for the chosen people of God (cf. Rom 11,7.28).
- (v) Lastly, in Acts, some believers among the Pharisees claim that Gentiles must be circumcised and keep the Law of Moses "to be saved" (15,1). The rebuttal is that Gentiles do not have to be circumcised because "(God) gave the Holy Spirit just as also to us (Jews)" (15,8). The logic is the same as that in Galatians, Romans, and 1 Thessalonians above: the Holy Spirit marks out God's people destined for salvation. As the Spirit fell on Israel at Pentecost (2,1-5), so too did the Spirit fall upon Cornelius and his companions (10,44-48), making ready one people "prepared for the Lord" (Lk 1,17).

These several texts swim in the same theological stream as Eph 1,13-14³⁵. The "we/you" Jew/Gentile contrast raises the question of who belongs in God's household (2,19) and what identity markers make this inclusion clear. In addition, that Eph 1,13-14 resembles a "missionary report" makes it more likely that issues of communal-identity are central. Thus, as in Gal 3,1-5, where Paul reflects on his initial proclamation of the gospel, and as in 1 Thess

³⁵ Such is true if AE is Paul himself, or if AE is a later author drawing on Pauline traditions like those surveyed above. The persistence of this assumed premise in diverse contexts, genres, and time periods makes clear its influence.

1,5, where Paul reminds his hearers of their initial reception of the Spirit, and as in Acts 15,8.12, where Peter and Paul recount the experience of the Spirit in Gentile communities, so too in Eph 1,13-14, AE tells his Gentile hearers that they were “sealed with the promised Holy Spirit” and therefore guaranteed the inheritance and redemption promised to members of God’s house³⁶. It is clear, then, that when AE says “sealed with the promised Holy Spirit”, regardless of the rite or experience here described, the theological import is that God has brought the Ephesians into the community of God and guaranteed to them the blessings of the covenant³⁷.

Now, if it is true as suggested to this point that Eph 1,13-14 makes the Holy Spirit the identity marker for Gentiles who were once “far off” but have now been “brought near by the blood of Christ” (Eph 2,13), then God’s Spirit functions as circumcision in some Jewish circles: “You shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskins, and it will be a sign of the covenant between me and you” (Gen 17,11)³⁸. Is this just coincidence? Or could AE be deliberately evoking circumcision at this point?

One can make a good case for an affirmative answer to that question given the probability that “seal” was used for circumcision as early as the first century CE. Most see Paul himself in Romans 4 as the earliest datable witness (which is an important text, to be sure, and will be discussed below), but two prior observations can be made. First, an argument from common sense. It was noted above that as early as the second century CE Christians were using “seal” to refer to baptism, and maybe they were doing it even earlier³⁹. Why? Probably

³⁶ On the Holy Spirit as an eschatological sign and an identity marker, see R. BULTMANN, *Theology of the New Testament* (trans. K. GROBEL) (New York, NY 1951) I, 41; F.F. BRUCE, *Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free* (Grand Rapids, MI 1977) 140; R.G. DEASLY, “The Holy Spirit in the Dead Sea Scrolls”, *WTJ* 21 (1986) 45-73; P.R. THORSELL, “The Spirit in the Present Age: Preliminary Fulfillment of the Predicted New Covenant According to Paul”, *JETS* 41 (1998) 398; R.J. MORALES, “The Words of the Luminaries, the Curse of the Law, and the Outpouring of the Spirit in Gal 3,10-14”, *ZNW* 100 (2009) 269-277.

³⁷ See N.T. WRIGHT, *Paul for Everyone. The Prison Epistles* (London 2004) 13.

³⁸ For discussion of the diverse views on circumcision, as reflected in the apparatus for Gen 17,14, see M. THIESSEN, “The Text of Genesis 17,14”, *JBL* 128 (2009) 625-642.

³⁹ Cf. J.C. LAMBERT, *The Sacraments of the New Testament. Being the Kerr Lectures for 1903* (Edinburgh – New York 1903); D.G. DIX, “Confirmation or Laying on of Hands?” (London 1936). Lambert and Dix contrast

because it was common in some Jewish circles to call circumcision a “seal”. It is quite unlikely that, beginning in the second century, Christians and Jews would independently coin the same term for their defining initiatory rite. Jewish ideas were often fodder for Christian beliefs and traditions, and this is likely another example in that long list.

Second, there could be pre-Christian attestation as evidenced in the Aramaic version of the *Testament of Levi* in the Cairo Geniza. To my knowledge this text has not been brought into consideration in the exegesis of Eph 1,13-14. The text is fragmentary, but some of the key details can be made out clearly: one of the sons of Jacob says to some unidentified persons, “Circumcise the foreskin of your flesh and you shall look li[k]e [us], and you shall be sealed (וְתִהְיוּ חֲתֻמִּים) like us with the circumcision of [...] and we shall be to y[ou] ...”⁴⁰. The text not only uses “seal” in reference to circumcision, it also appears that the seal is offered to uncircumcised “others” who would incur a bond (e.g. “like us ...”) with the twelve brothers should they accept. The “seal” thus functions as an identity marker possessed by the twelve. The date of the tradition is of course uncertain, but it is noteworthy that (i) the Aramaic has ancient Palestinian features⁴¹, and (ii) the resemblance of other portions of Aramaic *Levi* from the Geniza to fragments found in Cave 1 at Qumran have suggested to some that all are witnesses of a common source⁴². One cannot exclude the possibility that “seal” here is a later rewriting of *Levi*, but the text certainly deserves more attention than it has received to date.

Paul would corroborate Aramaic *Levi*. While discussing whether or not “Abraham is our forefather according to the flesh” (Rom

circumcision-as-seal with baptism and confirmation. Lambert considers Paul’s thought as a whole and esp. Col 2,11-12; Dix examines early church liturgy (not Eph 1,13-14).

⁴⁰ Cf. *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* (eds. F. GARCÍA MARTÍNEZ – E.J.C. TIGCHELAAR) (Leiden 1997) I, 51. For discussion see J.C. GREENFIELD, “Remarks on the Aramaic Testament of Levi from the Geniza”, *Selected Studies in the Pseudepigrapha and Apocrypha with Special Reference to the Armenian Tradition* (ed. M.E. STONE) (SVTP 9; Leiden – New York 1991) 228-246.

⁴¹ So J.C. GREENFIELD, “Remarks on the Aramaic Testament of Levi from the Geniza”, 242: “the morphology of the Aramaic of the Geniza Testament of Levi is similar to that of Qumran Aramaic and is on the whole free of later forms”.

⁴² Cf. R.A. KUGLER, *From Patriarch to Priest. The Levi-Priestly Tradition from Aramaic Levi to Testament of Levi* (Atlanta, GA 1996) 39-41; IDEM, *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* (Sheffield 2001) 48.

4,1), Paul says that “(Abraham) received a sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith which was in uncircumcision” (σφραγίδα τῆς δικαιοσύνης τῆς πίστεως τῆς ἐν τῇ ἀκροβυστίᾳ, 4,11). It is probable that Paul picks up a common idiom when calling circumcision a “seal”⁴³. After all, Paul’s objective in Rom 4 is to take a common interpretation of Abraham and subvert it, and we know that the description of Abraham as one “justified by works” was prevalent⁴⁴. As Paul’s exegetical treatment of Abraham is best understood in light of a presupposed anti-type, it would be fitting if “seal” was connected to circumcision and hence the Abrahamic portrait Paul here attempts to rework. In addition, that Paul has precedent from the scriptures to call circumcision a “sign” (cf. Gen 17,11) shows that he is not inventing his own terminology, and it would be consistent if he also had precedent from Jewish tradition to call circumcision a “seal” in the very same sentence.

There are several other sources which call circumcision a seal and they likely preserve this early tradition. In the *Epistle of Barnabas*⁴⁵, the author anticipates an objection from an imaginary Jewish interlocutor: “But you will say, ‘Surely the people were circumcised as a seal!’” (καὶ μὴν περιτέμνεται ὁ λαὸς εἰς σφραγίδα, 9.6)⁴⁶. The potential objection provided by the author of *Barnabas* presupposes that the use of “seal” for circumcision was common parlance. It is also noteworthy that *Barnabas* parallels Romans in discussing circumcision-as-seal in the larger context of a debate about covenant identity markers.

The use of “seal” for circumcision also appears in the Targums. In *Targum Canticles* 3.8, the interpreter claims “every one of them

⁴³ So FITZER, “σφραγίς, σφραγίζω, κατασφραγίζω”, *TDNT* VII, 946-50; BEASLEY-MURRAY, *Baptism in the New Testament*, 175 (“possible”); HUGEDE, *L’Épître aux Éphésiens*, 42-43, n. 128 (“probable”); DUNN, *Romans 1-8*, 209; AUNE, *Revelation 6-16*, 459.

⁴⁴ Cf. Sir 44,20a; *Jub.* 16.28; 24.11; 2 *Bar.* 57.1-2; CD III, 2; 1 Macc 2,52; Jas 2,21. See U. LUZ, *Das Geschichtsverständnis des Paulus* (Munich 1968) 177-180; F. HAHN, “Genesis 15,6 im Neuen Testament”, *Probleme biblischer Theologie. Festschrift für G. von Rad* (ed. H.W. WOLFF) (Munich 1971) 94-97.

⁴⁵ M.W. HOLMES, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 373, claims the parameters are after 70 CE but before 134 CE. For arguments that date *Barnabas* as early as the time of Vespasian, see J.B. LIGHTFOOT, *Apostolic Fathers* (ed. J.R. HARMER) (Grand Rapids, MI 1956) 134-135; J.A.T. ROBINSON, *Redating the New Testament* (Philadelphia, PA 1976) 313-319.

⁴⁶ Translated by HOLMES, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 409.

(Israelites) [bears] the seal of circumcision upon his flesh, just as it was sealed upon the flesh of Abraham their Father”⁴⁷. Again, the seal is connected with Abraham as in Romans 4 and functions to mark out his descendants in the covenant. The Targum probably contains traditions that date to Second Temple times, but it is impossible to know for sure⁴⁸.

One finds a similar idea in liturgical prayers and benedictions in the rabbinic literature. In the *Passover Haggadah* one thanks God “for thy covenant which thou hast sealed in our flesh”, referring to circumcision⁴⁹. So too, in the benedictions recited during the circumcision ceremony, the Jerusalem and Babylonian Talmuds record:

Praised (be the One) Who sanctified the beloved from the womb, Who put a statute in his flesh, and sealed his descendants with a holy sign of the covenant; therefore, as a reward for this, O living God, our part, our rock, command to save the beloved of our flesh from destruction. Praised are You, O Eternal, Who seals the covenant (y. *Ber.* 9.3)⁵⁰.

He who circumcises must recite, ‘Who hast sanctified the beloved one from the womb; He set a statute in his flesh, and his offspring he sealed with the sign of the holy covenant. Therefore as a reward for this, O living God Who art our portion, give command to save the beloved of our flesh from the pit, for the sake of Thy covenant which Thou hast set in our flesh. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, Who makest the covenant (b. *Šabb.* 137b)⁵¹.

These benedictions refer to Abraham, his offspring, the covenant, and call circumcision a “sign” which echoes Gen 17,11 like Paul in Romans 4. As liturgical compositions – e.g., intended for repeated use in community gatherings – the nature of the genre

⁴⁷ Translated by P.S. ALEXANDER, *The Targum of Canticles* (The Aramaic Bible 17a; Collegeville, MN 1987) 125-126. Alexander believes that the reference to baptism as “seal” is an old tradition.

⁴⁸ ALEXANDER, *The Targum of Canticles*, 55, believes that some traditions found in the Targum are from the Second Temple period.

⁴⁹ Cited in MCKNIGHT, “Covenant and Spirit: The Origins of the New Covenant Hermeneutic”, *The Holy Spirit and Christian Origins*, 47.

⁵⁰ Translated by H.W. GUGGENHEIMER, *Jerusalem Talmud, First Order. Zeraïm Tractate Berakhot* (Berlin – New York, NY 2000) 657.

⁵¹ Translated by I. EPSTEIN, *The Babylonian Talmud* (London 1938) 692.

is not to create new terminology but to instill and frame well-known terminology in a proper theological setting. In addition, such a liturgical composition is the least likely to suffer drastic change in the course of transmission, as circumcision was one Jewish rite largely unaffected by the destruction of the temple in 70 CE ⁵².

In all, it can be regarded as probable that the use of “seal” for circumcision was in use before, during, and after the time AE would have penned Ephesians, and that such a description of circumcision was often connected with Abraham and the identity markers of the covenant.

III. Five Concluding Arguments: Spirit-sealing as Circumcision by the Spirit

With the syntax, context, and logic of Eph 1,13-14 established, we can make five concluding arguments that secure that “sealed with the promised Holy Spirit” evokes circumcision.

First, as many other scholars have noted, one finds in Paul, Acts, and elsewhere that the reception of the Spirit can serve as the equivalent of circumcision as an identity-marker ⁵³. For example, Paul claims in Philippians that “we are the circumcision, the ones worshipping *by the Spirit of God* and boasting in Christ Jesus and not confiding in the flesh” (Phil 3,3, my italics). Similarly, Paul says in Romans that “the (true) Jew is in secret, and (has) *a circumcision of heart by the Spirit* and not by the letter” (Rom 2,29, my italics). One also recalls the contrast between “flesh” and “Spirit” in Galatians, since the “flesh” language is crudely drawn from the rite of circumcision (cf. Gal 5,16-26) ⁵⁴. So too, the author of Luke-Acts says that the initial claim of believing Pharisees at the “Jerusalem council” that Gentiles must be circumcised (15,5) is countered by testimonies that the Gentiles received the Spirit (15,8.12). The point in all these texts is that

⁵² On dating the rabbinic traditions, see S.J.D. COHEN, *From the Maccabees to the Mishnah* (Louisville, KY – London 2006) 210-213.

⁵³ For example, note KÄSEMANN (cited in DUNN, *Romans 1-8*, 209): “Paul saw the gift of the Spirit as the eschatological equivalent to or fulfillment of circumcision”. Cf. M. LEE, “An Evangelical Dialogue on Luke, Salvation, and Spirit Baptism”, *Pneuma* 26 (2004) 88; A.W. ZWIER, *Christ, the Spirit and the Community of God. Essays on Acts of the Apostles* (Tübingen 2010) 110.

⁵⁴ Cf. J.L. MARTYN, “A Law-Observant Mission to Gentiles”, *Theological Issues in the Letters of Paul* (Edinburgh 1997) 7-24.

God's people are not defined by the covenantal marker made with Abraham, but by the eschatological Spirit poured out on Jew and Gentile alike (cf. *Gos. Thom.* 53; *Odes Sol.* 11.2). That one finds this motif elsewhere in the New Testament and in Paul in particular shows that AE (either Paul himself, or an early interpreter of Paul) could do something similar in Eph 1,13-14.

Second, it appeared to some that circumcision was a definitive step in Jewish proselytization, and AE considers Spirit-sealing as the key step in the "conversion-initiation" of his Gentile audience⁵⁵. This point assumes the argument above that the aorist participles (v. 13) are best understood as antecedent to the main verb "being sealed". The sequence parallels a description in both Jewish and pagan sources of circumcision as a final rite of passage (all italics mine):

When Achior saw all that the God of Israel had done, he believed firmly in God. *So he was circumcised*, and joined the house of Israel, remaining so to this day (Judith 14,10 NRSV).

(Metilius) when he searched for mercy, and promised that he would judaize *to the point of circumcision*, they left him alone alive (Josephus, *War* 3.454 LCL).

Circumcision was adopted by them as a mark of difference from other men. *Those who come over to their religion adopt the practice*, and have this lesson first instilled to them: to despise all gods, to disown their country, and set at naught parents, children, and brethren (Tacitus, *Histories* 5.5 LCL).

⁵⁵ M. THIESSEN, *Contesting Conversion: Genealogy, Circumcision, and Identity in Ancient Judaism and Christianity* (New York 2011) has recently shown that there were discordant voices in the Second Temple period on whether circumcision could make non-Jews Jews. Informed by Thiessen's work, therefore, the following discussion of "proselytism" neither assumes that all Jews would have agreed on a strict process of Gentile assimilation, nor that "proselytes" would have been considered full-status Jews. For support of the view that circumcision was seen (by some) as a key boundary marker between Jew and Gentile, see J.J. COLLINS, "A Symbol of Otherness: Circumcision and Salvation in the First Century", *"To See Ourselves as Others See Us"*. Christians, Jews, "Others" in Late Antiquity (eds. J. NEUSNER – E.S. FRERICHs) (Atlanta, GA 1985) 163-186; S. COHEN, "Crossing the Boundary and Becoming a Jew", *HTR* 82 (1989) 28, n. 47; P. BARNETT, "The Jewish Mission in the Era of the New Testament and the Apostle Paul", *The Gospel to the Nations* (eds. P. BOLT – M. THOMPSON) (Sydney 2000) 264; M. BIRD, *Crossing Over Sea and Land. Jewish Missionary Activity in the Second Temple Period* (Peabody, MA 2010) 17-43.

Some who have had a father who reveres the Sabbath, worship nothing but the clouds, and the divinity of the heavens, and see no difference between eating swine's flesh, from which their father abstained, and that of man; and *in time they take to circumcision* (Juvenal, *Saturae* 15.96-106 LCL).

The school of Shammai say: If a man become a *proselyte* on the day before Passover he may immerse himself and consume his Passover-offering in the evening. And the School of Hillel say: He that separates himself from his uncircumcision is as one that separates himself from a grave (*m. Pesah* 8.8 Danby).

In the Mishnah, the opinions of Shammai and Hillel are parallel such that "become a proselyte" in the description of Shammai's opinion corresponds to "separate himself from his uncircumcision" in the description of Hillel's opinion. Thus, it is assumed that circumcision is the key step⁵⁶. In the others, circumcision is clearly considered the defining step in becoming part of the people of God. Thus, the process in Eph 1,13 from hearing and believing to being sealed with the Spirit corresponds to the process of Jewish proselytism in some circles which moved from acknowledgement of the one God (and the forsaking of pagan gods) to undergoing the rite of circumcision. This formal similarity with Eph 1,13-14 can be regarded as further evidence that in Eph 1,13 "sealed" functions as circumcision in making God-fearers partakers in God's promises.

Thirdly, there is evidence that circumcision was contentious in the community/communities AE addressed and caused division between Jews and Gentiles. Detailed discussion of the *Sitz im Leben* of Eph-

⁵⁶ Here I side with J. NOLLAND, "Uncircumcised Proselytes", *JSJ* 12 (1981) 173-194, in his debate with N.J. McELENNEY, "Conversion, Circumcision and the Law", *NTS* 20 (1973) 319-341. McEleney argues that, for Philo, "embracing the creed (of one God)" or "circumcising the pleasures" was sufficient (cf. *Virtues* 179; *QE* 2.2) for the proselytization of Gentiles, and highlighted that the rabbis debated this very issue (cf. *b. Yebam.* 46a). Nolland argues convincingly, however, that Philo's statements are occasional and not to be taken as blanket statements about proselytism in general (cf. Philo's attack on the allegorists of circumcision in *Migration* 89-105) and that the rabbinic statements are best understood as examples of "idealistic" debates about the Torah rather than practical debates about how proselytism actually worked. See also E.P. SANDERS, *Judaism: Practice and Belief* 63 BCE-66 CE (London - Philadelphia, PA 1992) 11.

esians is impossible to be sure, but the clearest window is Chapter 2 which charts the transition of Gentiles from "far" to "near". AE says, "Remember that formerly you Gentiles in the flesh, those called 'uncircumcision' by those called 'circumcision' (though) in the flesh made by hands, that you were in that age apart from Christ ..." (Eph 2,11)⁵⁷. It appears, therefore, that there was some name-calling going on, even if it is not clear if we have an "in-house" dispute or rather conflicts between Gentile Christians and local Jews⁵⁸. But, in any case, the larger point is clear: the Gentile recipients of the epistle had suffered the brunt of ethnic slurs. AE's response to this situation in 2,11-13 is to explain that the Gentiles "formerly" (ποτέ, v. 11) were "separate from Christ" and "strangers to the covenants of promise" (v. 12), but "in Christ Jesus" (v. 13) they are no longer strangers but "made one" (v. 14) with those who formerly labeled them. The previous identity markers of "circumcision" and "uncircumcision" have therefore been "abolished" by Christ (2,16-17). Not only does this ethnic tension provide a fitting occasion for the interpretation of 1,13-14 offered thus far, the argument of 2,11-22 is, in essence, a longer exposition of the argument in 1,13-14: (i) as in the "circumcision" and "uncircumcision" of 2,11, AE in 1,13 begins by highlighting ethnic division with the change in pronoun from "we" to "you"; (ii) as in 2,13's "but now in Christ Jesus ...", AE in 1,13 twice repeats that "in him (Christ)" these Gentiles have experienced their hearing, believing, and being sealed⁵⁹; (iii) as the "two are made one" in 2,14, AE in 1,14 resumes the first person plural to claim that "we" and "you" are both guaranteed "*our inheritance*" (italics mine)⁶⁰. Eph 1,13-14 therefore prepares for 2,11ff: physical circumcision guaranteed "the covenant of promise" only to a select group, but sealing with the Holy Spirit "in Christ Jesus" guarantees that the Gentiles are "co-heirs, members of the same body, and sharers of the promise in Christ Jesus" (Eph 3,6)⁶¹.

⁵⁷ On the significance of this designation, see McELeNEY, "Conversion, Circumcision and the Law", 337.

⁵⁸ For discussion see A.T. LINCOLN, "The Church and Israel in Ephesians 2", *CBQ* 49 (1987) 605-624; C.J. ROETZEL, "Jewish Christian-Gentile Christian Relations: A Discussion of Ephesians 2,15", *ZNW* 4 (1983) 81-89.

⁵⁹ R. SCHNACKENBURG, *Der Brief an die Epheser* (Köln 1982) 63, also notes this connection: "sie (the Ephesians) sollen sich dankbar erinnern, daß es ihnen 'in Christus' geschenkt wurde".

⁶⁰ See MARTIN, *Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon*, 20.

⁶¹ Early Christian reflection on physical circumcision emphasized its ex-

Fourthly, the language of “inheritance”, “redemption”, and “possession” (vv. 13-14) shows that the consequences of being sealed with the Holy Spirit are the same as that of circumcision in some Jewish circles. The Gentiles are made members of eschatological Israel, descendants of Abraham, and “inheritors” of God’s promises not by “circumcision made with hands” (2,11) but by Spirit-sealing. The three terms in 1,14 (κληρονομία, ἀπολύτρωσις, περιποίησις) are the clue here⁶². It is nearly unanimous in New Testament literature that *inheritance* language relates to covenant and promise motifs, particularly the Abraham cycle (Gal 3,18.29; 4,7; Rom 4,13; 8,17; Heb 11,8; cf. 1QS XI, 7-8; 1QH VI, 13, 19)⁶³. Ernest Best is therefore only partly correct to note that “our inheritance” (v. 14) refers to “adoption, forgiveness, sealing with the Spirit, that is to say all the blessings intended in v. 3ff”⁶⁴, because the connotation goes deeper

clusivity as a point of contrast with the universality of the Gospel. Note Justin Martyr, *Dial.* 33 (*ANF* 1,206): “The inability of the female sex to receive circumcision proves that circumcision as given for a sign. It was not given as a work of righteousness”. In addition, many Christian texts claim that baptism (which is related to the bestowal of the Spirit, for some) is the new form of circumcision in the new covenant. See Origen, *Hom. Luc.* 14.1 (*FC* 94,56); *Hom. Jos.* 5.6 (*FC* 105,64); Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catech.* 5.6 (*NPNF*² 7,30); Ambrose, *Abr.* 1.29; 2.91.

⁶² Here I agree with HUGEDE, *L’Épître aux Éphésiens*, 43: “Les mots *promesse, arrhes, héritage* s’appellent entre eux, et leur association trouve son origine dans l’A.T ...” (italics orig.).

⁶³ P.L. Hammer’s claim that “inheritance” has a past orientation related to Christology in Galatians and Romans and a future orientation related to Jew/Gentile unity in Ephesians cannot be sustained. See “A Comparison of ΚΛΗΡΟΝΟΜΙΑ in Paul and Ephesians”, *JBL* 79 (1960) 267-272. For a reasoned critique see D.R. DENTON, “Inheritance in Paul and Ephesians”, *EVQ* 54 (1982) 157. On the connection between “inheritance” and the “kingdom of God” see J.D. HESTER, *Paul’s Concept of Inheritance* (SJT Occasional Papers 14; Edinburgh – London 1968). See also R.P. MARTIN, *New Testament Foundations* (Exeter 1978) II, 230.

⁶⁴ BEST, *Commentary on Ephesians*, 146. *Contra* A. LINDEMANN, *Die Aufhebung der Zeit. Geschichtsverständnis und Eschatologie im Epheserbrief* (Gütersloh 1975) 104, who says the “pledge” is synonymous with the inheritance, thus eliminating any room for future consummation. *Contra* also WRIGHT, *Paul for Everyone*, 11-12, who claims that “inheritance” refers primarily to the promise of land. This argument overlooks the “transcendentalization” of the inheritance motif evident already in the LXX and also found in the New Testament and rabbinic literature. See FOERSTER, “κληρονόμος”,

than just the *berakah* of Ephesians. The inheritance motif evokes God's promises with Israel and thus anticipates AE's later comment that "the Gentiles are *co-heirs* (συγκληρονόμα) and members-of-the-same-body and *sharers of the promise* (συμμέτοχα τῆς ἐπαγγελίας) in Christ Jesus through the gospel" (3,6, italics mine). All that the Gentiles were assumed not to possess in 2,11-12 on account of their "uncircumcision" they were said to receive in 1,14 on account of their being sealed with the promised Holy Spirit.

In addition, "redemption" and "possession" are terms with rich history in biblical literature and are also best understood within this covenantal context. Redemption denotes liberation from hostile powers, as in the Exodus from Egypt ⁶⁵. Those "sealed" with the Holy Spirit, and thus made "members of God's house" (Eph 2,19), are the ones guaranteed the "redemption" promised to Israel ⁶⁶. The enigmatic reference to "the possession" has been troublesome for exegetes, but it most likely refers to the people of God as God's possession ⁶⁷. Luther took the phrase as "zu unserer Erlösung, daß

TDNT III, 776-785. For non-Christian Jewish texts which discuss inheriting "the world to come", see D.C. ALLISON JR., *Constructing Jesus: Memory, Imagination, and History* (Grand Rapids, MI 2010) 191-192. Some who take "inheritance" to refer to eternal life include Jerome in HEINE, *The Commentaries of Origen and Jerome on St Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians*, 105; CALVIN, *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul to the Galatians and Ephesians*, 209; DIBELIUS, *An die Kolosser, Epheser. An Philemon*, 63 ("die Aneignung des himmlischen Erbes durch die Christen").

⁶⁵ Cf. D. DAUBE, "Redemption", *The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism* (London 1956) 268-284.

⁶⁶ One best understands ἀρραβών in the sense of "down payment" or "first installment" because it is *part* of the coming inheritance, not something distinct from it. See Irenaeus, *Haer.* 8.1-2 (ANF I, 533-534); T. Mopsuestia, *Ad Eph.* 133 in *Theodore of Mopsuestia: The Commentaries on the Minor Epistles of Paul* (trans. R.A. GREER) (SBLWGRW 26; Atlanta, GA 2010) 133; J.B. LIGHTFOOT, *Notes on the Epistles of St. Paul* (Grand Rapids, MI 1957 [orig. 1895]) 323-324. This is clearly the sense of 2 Cor 1,22. See also Acts 2,38-39; Gal 3,14b. The comments of F.F. Bruce on Galatians in *Commentary on Galatians* (NIGC; Grand Rapids, MI 1982) 168, work for Ephesians as well: "The substance of the 'promise' is the gift of the Spirit".

⁶⁷ To read τῆς περιποιήσεως as God's possession corresponds to the common use of seals to indicate ownership or possession. As circumcision was often understood to claim the people of Israel as God's possession (cf. *Jub.* 15.26-28), it is perhaps one reason why the seal metaphor was used for circumcision in the first place.

wir sein Eigentum würden" ("to our redemption, that we should be his possession"), and many agree⁶⁸. There are good parallels in the Septuagint and other literature for this usage (Mal 3,17 LXX; 1 Thess 5,9; 1 Pet 2,9), and the notion that God here acquires a people for God's name befits the theocentric character of the *berakah* better than the alternative that the Spirit-sealed people acquire a reward termed "the possession"⁶⁹. The logic of v. 14 therefore is similar to Paul's inference in Romans 8 that the "children of God" are also "heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ" (8,16-17) but here stated inversely: those who have received an earnest of the inheritance are certainly guaranteed redemption as God's chosen.

Fifthly, sociologists of religion have shown that religious groups often understand new situations and even model new rites and rituals on older prototypes or cultural assumptions⁷⁰. The relevance for Eph 1,13-14 is obvious: what better way to signal the "conversion-initiation" of Gentiles into the movement begun and sustained by Jews than the rite of circumcision which some Jews themselves used to signal the inclusion of Gentile proselytes into the fold? So too, as circumcision was a statement about the identity of the community of Israel — e.g., that they are marked out as descendants of Abraham and members of an ancient covenant — so does Spirit-sealing make the statement that the *ekklesia* of Jews and Gentiles is a community that lives "in the fullness of times" (v. 10) and experiences the outpouring of God's Spirit (e.g. Ezek 36,26-27; Joel 2,28-29).

⁶⁸ Cf. J. EADIE, *A Commentary on the Greek Text of the Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians* (New York, NY 1861) 70. Others who would agree with Luther include CALVIN, *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul to the Galatians and Ephesians*, 210, who says the possession obtained "is not the kingdom of heaven, or a blessed immortality, but the Church itself". Cf. BENIGL, *Gnomon of the New Testament*, IV, 69; WESTCOTT, *Saint Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians*, 17-18; THIELMAN, *Ephesians*, 83.

⁶⁹ This point is made by P. PERKINS, *Ephesians* (ANTC; Nashville, TN 1997) 44. Though it should be said that if "the possession" is exegetical and thus corresponds to "the inheritance" in the preceding phrase, the overall argument in this article would stand. Circumcision and Spirit-sealing marked out God's people as God's possession and also guaranteed God's people the inheritance or "possession". Cf. SCHNACKENBURG, *Der Brief an die Epheser*, 66.

⁷⁰ Cf. e.g. C.M. BELL, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (Oxford – New York, NY 1992); B.C. ALEXANDER, "Ritual and Current Studies on Ritual. Overview", *Anthropology of Religion* (ed. S.D. GLAZIER) (Westport, CT – London 1997) 139-160.



To briefly recap: it was noted in the second section that AE brings to the fore the contrast between Jew and Gentile with the shift in pronoun usage (v. 13), and that the structure of vv. 13-14 resembles an early Christian "missionary-report". The bringing together of Jew and Gentile in the common experience of the Spirit looks forward to the rest of the epistle in which Jew/Gentile unity is one of the most persistent themes ⁷¹. It was then noted that the connection between Spirit reception (v. 13) and future promises of inheritance and redemption (v. 14) is probably informed by circumcision also called a "seal". The final section bolstered the point with observations drawn from parallels in early Christian texts, parallels in the proselytization of Gentiles by Jews, historical circumstances in the Ephesian community, the terminology in 1,14 and the rest of the epistle, and the sociological study of new religious movements. In sum, then, it can be regarded as highly probable that "sealed with the promised Holy Spirit" takes on the role of circumcision in order to mark out God's "possession" and assure the hearers of God's future blessings.

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SUMMARY

Most studies of Eph 1's "sealed with the promised Holy Spirit" have tried to articulate the Christian ritual or experience that the sealing metaphor describes, such as baptism, confirmation, charismatic gifts, etc. This article, however, refocuses on the theological logic of vv. 13-14 to argue that, regardless of the Christian rite described, the author here explicates that rite by referring to circumcision with the use of the verb "sealed". The argument includes the insight that the description of "sealed" in Eph 1,13-14 corresponds to other texts that describe circumcision as a final step in Jewish proselytism.

⁷¹ On the unity theme, see J.H. HOULDEN, *Paul's Letters from Prison* (Baltimore, MD 1970) 238; Barth, *Ephesians*, 143; LINCOLN, *Ephesians*, 265; MACDONALD, *Colossians and Ephesians*, 206; J.A. BARNARD, "Unity in Christ: The Purpose of Ephesians", *ExpTim* 120 (2009) 171.

ANIMADVERSIONES

Hide or Hue? Defining Hebrew תַּחַשׁ

The word תַּחַשׁ has long puzzled Hebrew lexicographers. It occurs fourteen times in the Hebrew Bible, almost exclusively in the descriptions of the tabernacle. In all but two of its occurrences (Num 4,25; Ezek 16,10), תַּחַשׁ occurs in construct with עוֹר (“skin, hide”), demonstrating that it relates to animal skins. It appears generally as a material used for making the tabernacle (Exod 25,5; 35,7. 23) but also appears specifically with reference to the outer covering of the tabernacle (Exod 26,14; 36,19; 39,34; Num 4,25) and a material used to cover the tabernacle’s accoutrements (Num 4,6.8.10-12.14). The only exception is Ezek 16,10, in which תַּחַשׁ appears with reference to sandals.

The present paper evaluates the most common definitions for this elusive Hebrew word, focusing particularly on Stephanie Dalley’s recent consideration of this term ¹, an influential article that William H.C. Propp labels “a *tour de force* marshalling of philological and archaeological evidence” ².

I. Hebrew תַּחַשׁ as a Color

The oldest extant traditions surrounding Hebrew תַּחַשׁ understand it as a color. This is the testimony, for example, of the ancient versions: the Septuagint and Vulgate read *υακίνθινος* and *ianthinus*, respectively (both meaning “dark red, dark blue”), and the Peshitta and Targums render תַּחַשׁ as ܪܘܡܐ and ܪܡܝܢ, respectively (both meaning “vermillion”). The same understanding appears in Josephus (*A.J.* 3.102).

In recent years, several scholars have revived this explanation of תַּחַשׁ with reference to Akkadian. Shmuel Ahituv and Hayim Tadmor, for example, consider Hebrew תַּחַשׁ cognate with Akkadian *dušû*, *duḫšû*, a color term related to Sumerian DUŠIA and Hurrian *tuhšiwe* ³. Notably, Akkadian *dušû*

¹ S. DALLEY, “Hebrew *tahāš*, Akkadian *duḫšû*, Faience and Beadwork”, *Journal of Semitic Studies* 45 (2000) 1-19.

² W.H.C. PROPP, *Exodus 19-40. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 2A; New York 2006) 375.

³ S. AHITUV – H. TADMOR, *אנציקלופדיה קראית: אוצר הידיעות על המקרא והקופתו*, “תַּחַשׁ” (Jerusalem 1950-1988) VIII, 520-521. Already in the late 1800s Franz Delitzsch suggested a connection between Hebrew and Akkadian *dušû*, but he incorrectly thought that the Akkadian term denoted an animal skin rather than a color (F. DELITZSCH, “Specimen Glossarii

occurs in conjunction with the logogram KUŠ, “leather”, perhaps akin to the construction עור תחש or עורות תחשים in biblical Hebrew.

This view has much to commend itself. It takes into account the frequent association of Hebrew תחש with color-related descriptions (cf. Exod 25,5; 26,14; 35,7.23; 36,19; 39,34; Num 4,6.8.11-12) and has good support from the ancient versions. However, despite its association with color and the early testimony of the ancient versions, it is not at all certain that תחש is indeed a color word. Moreover, this understanding faces at least two phonological difficulties. First and most importantly, Hebrew תחש does not exhibit the final *-û* vowel of Akkadian *dušû* as would be expected if it were a loan from Akkadian. Evidence from Akkadian loanwords into Hebrew and Aramaic indicates that final long (circumflexed) vowels were still pronounced and represented orthographically by Northwest Semitic speakers as late as the Neo-Babylonian period⁴. Second, the representation of Akkadian *d* with Hebrew ת is anomalous unless one postulates a culture word⁵ or a loan prior to the first millennium BCE since Akkadian *d* appears as ד, not ת, in loans into Northwest Semitic during the first millennium BCE⁶.

II. Hebrew תחש as “Unicorn”

Rabbinic tradition commonly identifies Hebrew תחש with the mythological unicorn, often combining it with the above idea that this word relates to color. The Jerusalem Talmud describes a dispute over the meaning of Hebrew תחש, concluding that it denotes a kosher animal with one horn (י. *Šabb.* 2,3), and the Babylonian Talmud also mentions this notion (*b. Šabb.* 28b). Rashi and Midrash Tanḥuma (*Tanḥ.* Terumah 6),

Ezechielico-Babylonici”, *Liber Ezechielis*. Textum Masoreticum accuratissime expressit, e fontibus Masorae varie illustravit, notis criticis confirmavit [Leipzig 1884] xvi-xvii).

⁴ S.A. KAUFMAN, *The Akkadian Influences on Aramaic* (Assyriological Studies 19; Chicago, IL 1974) 149; cf. J.P. HYATT, *The Treatment of Final Vowels in Early Neo-Babylonian* (YOSR 23; New Haven, CT 1941) 56-57. The evidence for the treatment of final long vowels in Akkadian loans in biblical Hebrew is much sparser than the Aramaic evidence, based only on *hapax* and *dis legomena*, and is somewhat uncertain. However, it nevertheless indicates that final long vowels were still represented (P.V. MANKOWSKI, *Akkadian Loanwords in Biblical Hebrew* [HSS 47; Winona Lake, IN 2000] 162-163).

⁵ Cf. G. RUBIO, “Eblaite, Akkadian, and East Semitic”, *The Akkadian Language in Its Semitic Context*. Studies in the Akkadian of the Third and Second Millennium BC (eds. G. DEUTSCHER – N.J.C. KOUWENBERG) (Uitgaven van het Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten te Leiden 106; Leiden 2006) 132.

⁶ MANKOWSKI, *Akkadian Loanwords in Biblical Hebrew*, 154-155; KAUFMAN, *Akkadian Influences*, 138-139.

moreover, contend that God specially created this multi-colored, one-horned animal for its usage in the wilderness by the Israelites. The miraculous creature described in these sources is nothing other than the mythological unicorn ⁷.

As prevalent as this tradition may be, it cannot be accepted because it identifies Hebrew שָׁרָף with a mythological creature. The materials used for constructing the tabernacle are otherwise real materials, and the ancient Israelites would not have portrayed the tabernacle as being made from the skin of a creature that does not exist.

III. Hebrew שָׁרָף as "Badger"

The KJV's rendering of שָׁרָף as "badger" can be traced back to Martin Luther's translation of the Old Testament into German, first published in its complete form in 1534. Assuming that the German and Latin languages descended from Hebrew, thought to be the original language of humanity, Luther thought that the German form of Hebrew שָׁרָף was simply its phonologically corresponding form in German; hence his translation of *Dachs*, "badger" (cf. Latin *taxea* and Late Latin *taxus*, "badger") ⁸.

Although considered a perfectly legitimate translation technique during Luther's day, we now know that all the world's languages did not descend from Hebrew. One cannot translate an unknown Hebrew word with a similar-sounding alleged "cognate" in the target language. Hence, defining Hebrew שָׁרָף as "badger" is unacceptable.

IV. Hebrew שָׁרָף as "Dugong"

The Hebrew lexicographers Francis Brown, S.R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs argued that שָׁרָף means "dugong" (a large marine animal similar to the manatee) or "dolphin" in their lexicon. They arrived at this definition through comparison with Arabic *tūḥas* "dugong, dolphin" ⁹. Frank Moore Cross also adopted this etymology, claiming that the usage of dolphin skins for the Israelite tabernacle stems from El's watery abode ¹⁰.

⁷ AHITUV – TADMOR, "שָׁרָף", VIII, 520.

⁸ P. COOPER, "Of Badger Skins and Dugong Hides: A Translator's Guide to Tabernacle Covers", *Bible Review* 16.6 (2000) 30.

⁹ *BDB* 1065.

¹⁰ F.M. CROSS, JR., "The Priestly Tabernacle in the Light of Recent Research", *The Temple in Antiquity: Ancient Records and Modern Perspectives*, Based on a Symposium Held at Brigham Young University in March 1981 (ed. T.G. MADSEN) (Religious Studies Monograph Series 9; Provo, UT 1984) 95-96.

Without pointing specifically to any potential Arabic cognate, the nineteenth-century surveyor Edward Robinson suggested a similar meaning for Hebrew שִׁמְשִׁי by noting the modern Bedouin practice of making sandals from the thick skin of a fish caught in the Red Sea. He suggested that, based on this practice, the ancient Israelites could have utilized fish skin for constructing the tabernacle¹¹. The idea that Hebrew שִׁמְשִׁי denotes a marine animal like the dugong has found its way into several modern English translations, including the NIV, NEB, and NJPS.

This derivation is implausible on at least two counts. First, although the consonantal correspondence is correct, the nominal pattern of Hebrew שִׁמְשִׁי is not the pattern one would expect if it were cognate with Arabic *tuhās*. If the two were cognate, one would not expect a segolate pattern noun in Hebrew. Second, there is no evidence that the Israelites ever had access to dugong or dolphin skins, much less ever utilized them for the tabernacle. Robinson's observation that the modern Bedouin make sandals from fish — notably, not dugongs or dolphins — caught in the Red Sea does not prove that the Israelites did this in antiquity. Third, Cross' claim that the use of dolphin skins finds a parallel in El's dwelling falls apart under closer scrutiny. The Ugaritic texts never mention dolphins in connection with El's abode. Iconography does associate the dolphin with the goddess Tanit, but this is a later first-millennium BCE phenomenon attested at Punic sites such as Carthage, sites influenced by Greek iconography and mythology. Hence, no clear evidence exists for an association between dolphins and El's dwelling.

V. Hebrew שִׁמְשִׁי as "Faience Beadwork"

Stephanie Dalley has published a recent analysis of Hebrew שִׁמְשִׁי, devoting a relatively lengthy article to its derivation and meaning¹². Like Ahituv and Tadmor, she postulates a connection between Hebrew שִׁמְשִׁי and Akkadian *dušû*. However, she departs from their view in her definition of the term as "faience beadwork". According to Dalley, non-Hurrian peoples borrowed this allegedly Hurrian term on two separate occasions.

First, Sumerian speakers borrowed Hurrian *tuhšiwe* as DUĤ.ŠŪ.A, DUĤ.ŠĪ.A. Preservation of the Hurrian genitive ending *-we* accounts for the final diphthong. Akkadian speakers subsequently borrowed this term from Sumerian as *duhšiu*, *duhšû*, still preserving the Hurrian genitive end-

¹¹ E. ROBINSON, *Biblical Researches in Palestine and in the Adjacent Regions*. A Journal of Travels in the Year 1838 (Boston²1860) I, 116; cf. H.B. TRISTAM, *The Natural History of the Bible*. Being a Review of the Physical Geography, Geology, and Meteorology of the Holy Land, with a Description of Every Animal and Plant Mentioned in Holy Scripture (London⁹1898) 44-45.

¹² DALLEY, "Hebrew *tahaš*, Akkadian *duhšû*", 1-19.

ing. The medial *h* assimilated, leaving the form *dušû*, which subsequently became the preferred form in Akkadian as indicated by its widespread usage in the majority of dialects (Old Akkadian, Old Babylonian, Middle Assyrian, Middle Babylonian, Standard Babylonian, Neo-Assyrian, and Neo-Babylonian). Second, Akkadian speakers at Mari borrowed Hurrian *tuhšiwe* as *duhšu*. Unlike their fellow Akkadian speakers elsewhere, they borrowed it without the Hurrian genitive ending as indicated by the lack of representation of a final diphthong. Hebrew speakers subsequently borrowed Akkadian *duhšu* as שֹׁהֵם.

Dalley defines Akkadian *dušû*, and therefore also Hebrew שֹׁהֵם, as “faience beadwork”. She defends this definition by means of at least three points. First, she contends that the many different determinatives that occur before Akkadian *dušû*, such as KUS and NA₄, are in fact not determinatives but nouns with which *dušû* is bound by the construct state. Second, she notes that the ancient versions understood Hebrew שֹׁהֵם with reference to a color, indicating that this word relates to appearance and decoration. Third, she contends that the wide variety of contexts in which *dušû* appears — such as sandals, leather, and jewelry, among other items — finds parallels in ancient Near Eastern realia. These objects include beaded sandals discovered in Tutankhamen’s tomb (to which Dalley compares Tušratta’s gift of sandals in EA 22 ii 23-25) and a leather-based headdress with lapis lazuli beads attached from the third-millennium BCE tomb of Queen Pu-abi at Ur. Dalley further argues that these items provide parallels to the items associated with שֹׁהֵם in the Hebrew Bible.

Dalley’s view constitutes an admirable attempt to make sense of all the data, particularly the ancient versions’ insistence that this word relates to a color. However, the ancient versions are not always correct, particularly in the case of rare Hebrew terms. Moreover, like Ahituv and Tadmor’s interpretation, Dalley’s derivation cannot adequately explain the final long *-û* vowel of the Akkadian form. As discussed above, Dalley tries to burke the problem of the final vowel by postulating two separate borrowings, contending that Mari Akkadian — the source of Hebrew שֹׁהֵם — borrowed Hurrian *tuhšiwe* without the genitive ending (*duhšu*), whereas Sumerian (and thereby Akkadian) did (*duhšû*). It is unlikely, however, that Hurrian is the source of the Sumerian and Akkadian forms. The appearance of this word in the Hurrian genitive form does not demonstrate that it is ultimately Hurrian, especially since its Akkadian forms are widespread and not primarily limited to peripheral dialects as would probably be the case if it were Hurrian. In his work on Sumerian loanwords in Akkadian Stephen J. Lieberman derives Akkadian *dušû* from Sumerian¹³, and the *Chicago As-*

¹³ S.J. LIEBERMAN, *The Sumerian Loanwords in Old-Babylonian Akkadian*. Prolegomena and Evidence [HSS 22; Missoula, MT 1977] 507.

syrian Dictionary as well as von Soden derive Hurrian *tuhšiwe* from Akkadian or Sumerian, not vice versa ¹⁴.

Nevertheless, let us grant Dalley a Hurrian origin for the sake of argument. Even then, Dalley's loan hypothesis does not adequately explain the final *-û* of Akkadian *dušû*. Languages rarely borrow the original inflection along with the nominal stem ¹⁵, and the few that do (e.g., Coptic and Early Romani) almost always borrow the word in the nominative rather than oblique case ¹⁶. (Notable exceptions include mixed languages and "learned" borrowings from Greek and Latin ¹⁷.) It is unlikely, therefore, that the *-û* of Akkadian *dušû* reflects the Hurrian genitive ending *-we*.

When written syllabically, Akkadian *dušû* typically occurs as *du₈-ši-ia* or *du₈-šu-û*, and when written logographically it commonly appears as DU₈.ŠI.A. However, at Mari it typically occurs as DU₈.ŠÛ.A (e.g., ARM XXI 232, 1. 14). Contrary to what Dalley claims, the different spelling of this term at Mari is probably a local scribal convention for this word that has no bearing on the presence or absence of the final vowel. Even if Dalley were correct that this word lacked a final *-û* at Mari, she never explains why Hebrew speakers would have borrowed an unusual dialectal form from Mari rather than the much more common Akkadian form found elsewhere.

In any case, Dalley never adequately demonstrates that Akkadian *dušû* means "faience beadwork". Artifacts rarely come inscribed with any form of self-identification, so connecting excavated realia with terminology can be a difficult task. This is particularly the case with a word like Akkadian *dušû*, which appears with reference to many, many different objects: leather, wool, linen, stone and glass, sandals, plaques, cylinder seals, jewelry, equid harnesses, chariot seats, head-rests, shields, and so on. Given its numerous associations, Dalley's contention that the realia of Hebrew שִׁטְמָה matches the realia of this term is somewhat meaningless. In any case, the traditional understanding of Akkadian *dušû* as a color seems much more likely given the many different contexts in which it occurs ¹⁸.

¹⁴ CAD T 455; AHw 1367.

¹⁵ Systematic examination of many of the world's language families from many different regions provides no instances of case markers borrowed along with a loanword (Y. MATRAS, "The Borrowability of Structural Categories", *Grammatical Borrowing in Cross-Linguistic Perspective* [eds. Y. MATRAS – J. SAKEL] [Empirical Approaches to Language Typology 38; Berlin 2007] 44).

¹⁶ Cf. MATRAS, *Language Contact*, 160.

¹⁷ L. JOHANSON, "Case and Contact Linguistics", *The Oxford Handbook of Case* (eds. A.L. MALCHUKOV – A. SPENCER) (Oxford Handbooks in Linguistics; Oxford 2009) 495; Y. MATRAS, *Language Contact* (Cambridge Textbooks in Linguistics; Cambridge 2009) 173.

¹⁸ CAD D 200-202; T 455; AHw 179.

VI. Hebrew שָׁמַן as a Type of Egyptian Leather

Dalley unfortunately glosses over the most likely etymology for Hebrew שָׁמַן. In a short paragraph, she briefly mentions the possibility that שָׁמַן derives from Egyptian *šhs*, a verb used with reference to leather¹⁹. She quickly discounts this loan hypothesis, stating in a footnote: “The vogue for finding Egyptian cognates for Hebrew can also be seen in the misguided translation of *ḥašmal* as ‘brass’, which was based on comparison with the Egyptian *ḥsmn* meaning ‘bronze’, and is no longer favored”²⁰. While one cannot deny that scholars have postulated poor Egyptian etymologies for Hebrew words, שָׁמַן being one of them²¹, Dalley’s statement ignores the fruitful research on Egyptian loanwords in Northwest Semitic — especially Hebrew — that has taken place over the past fifty years²². A significant number of Egyptian loanwords as well as other Egyptian elements occur in the wilderness wandering narratives²³, precisely the context in which Hebrew שָׁמַן most often appears; so this loan hypothesis deserves more than a casual dismissal.

Egyptian *šhs* first appears during the Old Kingdom²⁴. As noted above, it occurs with reference to leather²⁵. Most commonly, *šhs* occurs along with *hnt* (“animal hide”) and relates to the process of stretching leather across a wooden frame for oil-curing. The ancient Egyptians used oil (as opposed to immersion in vegetable extracts for dyeing or tanning) to cure their leather. This was done by dipping the hide in oil, stretching it across a wooden frame, and scraping or rubbing the hide with a stone or other

¹⁹ R. HANNIG, *Großes Handwörterbuch Ägyptisch–Deutsch (2800 bis 950 v. Chr.)*. Die Sprache der Pharaonen (Kulturgeschichte der antiken Welt 64; Mainz am Rhein 52009) 1034; A. ERMAN – H. GRAPOW, *Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache* (Leipzig 1926-1931) V, 396. This derivation was first suggested by J.H. BONDI, “Gegenseitige Kultureinflüsse der Ägypter und Semiten”, *Aegyptiaca*. Festschrift für Georg Ebers zum 1. März 1897 (Leipzig 1897) 1-7. Recent proponents of this view include M. GÖRG, “Das Lexem *taḥaš*: Herkunft und Bedeutung”, *BN* 109 (2001) 5-9, and J.K. HOFFMEIER, *Ancient Israel in Sinai*. The Evidence for the Authenticity of the Wilderness Tradition (Oxford 2005) 212-213.

²⁰ DALLEY, “Hebrew *taḥaš*, Akkadian *duḥšū*”, 3.

²¹ Cf. Y. MUCHIKI, *Egyptian Proper Names and Loanwords in North-West Semitic* (SBLDS 173; Atlanta, GA 1999) 246.

²² E.g., MUCHIKI, *Egyptian Proper Names and Loanwords*; T.O. LAMBDIN, “Egyptian Loan Words in the Old Testament”, *JAOS* 73 (1953) 145-155.

²³ HOFFMEIER, *Ancient Israel in Sinai*, 209-221, 223-226.

²⁴ Egyptian *š* represents a palatal consonant (pronounced like *ch* as in English “church”) rather than an interdental as in Semitic.

²⁵ HANNIG, *Großes Handwörterbuch Ägyptisch–Deutsch*, 1034; A. ERMAN – H. GRAPOW, *Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache*, V, 396.

tool. Tomb scenes from many different periods depict this process ²⁶. Additionally, Egyptian *ths* can appear in conjunction with *tbw* (“sandal, foot sole”), denoting the process of stretching leather for making sandals.

Phonologically, Egyptian *ths* matches Hebrew שִׁתְּרָא well. After the Old Kingdom, Egyptian *t* and *t* frequently merged; hence by the New Kingdom *t* tends to be pronounced more like *t* ²⁷. During the Late period, moreover, texts explicitly write *ths* as *ths*, demonstrating that *t* had indeed become *t* for this word ²⁸. Correspondence of Egyptian *h* and Hebrew הֵ is, of course, as expected ²⁹. Lastly, one might contend that usage of Hebrew שִׁ for Egyptian *s* is problematic, but the name of Moses (Hebrew מֹשֶׁה, derived from Egyptian *msi*) demonstrates that they could be phonetically equivalent ³⁰. Moreover, Egyptian borrowings from West Semitic frequently use Egyptian *š* to render Semitic *š*, but they also sometimes use *s* ³¹, and Amarna Akkadian similarly renders Egyptian *s* as both *s* and *š* ³². Thus, although Hebrew ס seems to be the most common representation of Egyptian *s* ³³, שִׁ is also a possible correspondent.

As noted above, a good number of Egyptian loanwords as well as other Egyptian elements appear in the wilderness wandering narratives ³⁴. The tabernacle’s design, moreover, finds its best parallels in Egyptian structures ³⁵. It is significant that שִׁתְּרָא occurs in close conjunction with several

²⁶ C. VAN DRIEL-MURRAY, “Leatherwork and Skin Products”, *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Technology* (eds. P.T. NICHOLSON – I. SHAW) (Cambridge 2000) 303; D.A. STOCKS, “Leather”, *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt* (ed. D.B. REDFORD) (Oxford 2001) II, 282-283; R. DRENKHAHN, *Die Handwerker und ihre Tätigkeiten im alten Ägypten* (Ägyptologische Abhandlungen 31; Wiesbaden 1976) 7-17; IDEM, “Leder, -arbeiter, -bearbeitung”, *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* (eds. W. HELCK – E. OTTO – W. WESTENDORF) (Wiesbaden 1972-1992) III, 959-960.

²⁷ C. PEUST, *Egyptian Phonology. An Introduction to the Phonology of a Dead Language* (Monographien zur ägyptischen Sprache 2; Göttingen 1999) 123-125; J.P. ALLEN, *Middle Egyptian. An Introduction to the Language and Culture of Hieroglyphs* (Cambridge 2010) 20.

²⁸ A. ERMAN – H. GRAPOW, *Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache*, V, 396.

²⁹ MUCHIKI, *Egyptian Proper Names and Loanwords*, 267.

³⁰ J.F. QUACK, Review of Yoshiyuki Muchiki, *Egyptian Proper Names and Loanwords in North-West Semitic*, RBL (April 24, 2000) online: <http://www.bookreviews.org>.

³¹ J.E. HOCH, *Semitic Words in Egyptian Texts of the New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period* (Princeton, NJ 1994) 410.

³² MUCHIKI, *Egyptian Proper Names and Loanwords*, 310.

³³ Cf. MUCHIKI, *Egyptian Proper Names and Loanwords*, 266-267.

³⁴ HOFFMEIER, *Ancient Israel in Sinai*, 209-221, 223-226.

³⁵ HOFFMEIER, *Ancient Israel in Sinai*, 203-208; M.M. HOMAN, *To Your*

Egyptian loans, including שֹׁמֶר, “acacia wood” (Exod 25,5; 35,7) and שֵׁשׁ, “linen” (Exod 35,23; Ezek 16,10)³⁶. The Egyptian origin of many of the tabernacle realia as well as this term’s association with several specific Egyptian products strongly implies that תַּחֲשׁ is also an Egyptian product.

Thus, it is likely that an unattested nominal form of Egyptian *ths* referring to leather was adopted by Hebrew speakers as תַּחֲשׁ. This fits nicely with the frequent association of תַּחֲשׁ with עוֹר as well as the usage of תַּחֲשׁ with reference to sandals³⁷, which together strongly suggest that this word denotes a particular type of leather³⁸. Leather would have served as a durable, resilient material for the outer covering for the tabernacle (Exod 26,14; 36,19; 39,34; Num 4,25) and would have been the material of choice for making sandals (Ezek 16,10) — much more suitable, I contend, than hides of faience beadwork.

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Hebrew תַּחֲשׁ has a rich and varied history of interpretation, the most recent of which is Dalley’s proposal that תַּחֲשׁ means “faience beadwork” and is cognate with Akkadian *dušû*. However, as argued above, this derivation falls short linguistically as well as contextually. Dalley incorrectly attributes a Hurrian origin to this word and cannot explain the final *-û* of the Akkadian form. Moreover, she never demonstrates conclusively that the Sumerian, Akkadian, and Hebrew forms mean “faience beadwork”. Sumerian DUŠIA and Akkadian *dušû* seem rather to refer to a color, whereas Hebrew תַּחֲשׁ relates to animal skin.

On the other hand, a derivation from Egyptian *ths*, a term used with reference to leather, well explains the origin of Hebrew תַּחֲשׁ. The lack of any convincing Semitic etymology for Hebrew תַּחֲשׁ indicates a foreign

Tents, O Israel! The Terminology, Function, Form, and Symbolism of Tents in the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East (Culture and History of the Ancient Near East 12; Leiden 2002) 89-185; K.A. KITCHEN, “The Tabernacle – A Bronze Age Artifact”, ספר אברהם מלמט ארץ ישראל: מחקרים: בידעת הארץ ועתיקותה (eds. S. AHITUV, et al.) (Eretz-Israel 24; Jerusalem 1993) 119*-129*.

³⁶ MUCHIKI, *Egyptian Proper Names and Loanwords*, 256-258.

³⁷ Footwear, including sandals, was most commonly made from leather in antiquity. Cf. VAN DRIEL-MURRAY, “Leatherwork and Skin Products”, 312-316; M. STOL, “Leder(Industrie)”, *Reallexikon der Assyriologie und vorderasiatischen Archäologie* (eds. E. EBELING, et al.) (Berlin 1932-) VI, 539-540.

³⁸ Cf. C. HOUTMAN, *Exodus* (trans. S. WOUDESTRA) (Historical Commentary on the Old Testament; Leuven 1993-2002) I, 145.

loanword, and Egyptian *ths* provides a suitable donor term phonologically. Egyptian *ths* also offers a good match semantically: the contexts in which Hebrew שֶׁחַרְחָרִית occurs describe a material frequently associated with עֹר, implying that שֶׁחַרְחָרִית denotes a type of leather. Lastly, an Egyptian origin for Hebrew שֶׁחַרְחָרִית is consistent with Egypt's significant influence on the tabernacle, not only in the form of its plan and structure but also in the form of Egyptian loanwords for its components.

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SUMMARY

The word שֶׁחַרְחָרִית has long puzzled Hebrew lexicographers. The present paper evaluates the most common definitions for this elusive Hebrew word, focusing particularly on Stephanie Dalley's recent consideration of this term. Dalley's proposal that שֶׁחַרְחָרִית is derived from Akkadian *dušû* and means "faience beadwork" falls short linguistically as well as contextually. More plausibly, Hebrew שֶׁחַרְחָרִית originates with Egyptian *ths*, a term used with reference to leather. This well suits the contexts in which שֶׁחַרְחָרִית occurs and reflects Egyptian influence on the tabernacle and its terminology.

Was Jesus Right to Eat with Sinners and Tax Collectors?

According to Luke, the accusations brought to Pilate to justify Rome's putting Jesus to death were three: claiming to be Messiah or King, refusing to have people pay taxes to Rome, and inciting the people to revolution (23,2). What apparently moved the Sanhedrin earlier to bring Jesus to Pilate for judgment centered on two points: Jesus' refusal to deny that he is Messiah of Israel and Son of God (22,67-71). From a complete reading of the Gospel one knows of lesser criticisms of Jesus, such as his apparent disrespect of the Sabbath. One fault of Jesus is the subject of this essay. This is the fault of associating with and eating with sinners and tax-collectors ¹.

To give fair understanding to Jesus' critics in this matter, usually but not always Pharisees, it is best to begin by recalling the intentions of these critics ². Pharisees, and those like them, had an intense desire to obey the Law of Moses as it had been handed down to them with all of its accretions. The history of the Pharisees bears witness to their attempts at perfection, with suffering martyrdom the surest sign of their intense devotion to Yahweh. Given their appreciation and desire for perfection, one finds it easy to understand their wanting this perfection in all Jews, for to this perfect obedience all Israel was called. Indeed, many of Israel, imperfect as they were in their own lives, esteemed the Pharisees greatly and respected their practices and teachings. Even the criticism of Jesus towards the Pharisees does no harm to the lofty ideals they espoused and urged others to embrace as well ³. If the Pharisees held other Israelites in lesser esteem, it was only as a confirmation of their impatience with sins and sinners against the Law.

¹ "This aspect of Jesus' ministry has been admirably surveyed in a brief monograph by O. Hofius (*Jesu Tischgemeinschaft mit den Sündern* [Stuttgart 1967]) who claims that the table fellowship of Jesus with such people was a sign of the extension of God's forgiveness to them and at the same time an anticipation of the eschatological meal in the kingdom of God", I.H. MARSHALL, *Luke. Historian and Theologian* (Downers Grove, IL 1998) 138.

² "On the one hand, the religious authorities (particularly Pharisees) are 'respectful of Jesus and afford him the honor due a 'teacher', which is the term by which they address him ... Pharisees ... are attracted to Jesus coming from all over to hear him teach (5,17)", J.D. KINGSBURY, *Conflict in Luke. Jesus, Authorities, Disciples* (Minneapolis, MN 1991) 26.

³ Cf. Josephus, *Antiquities*, XVIII.1: "The cities give great attestations to them [Pharisees] on account of their entire virtuous conduct, both in the actions of their lives and their discourses also". Cf. also *Against Apion* 2:232-234: "Now, as for ourselves [not only Pharisees, but surely Pharisees included], I venture to say, that no one can tell of so many; nay, not of more than one or two that have

A hallmark of Pharisaic determination to reach perfection was the tendency to control sinfulness by a kind of exaggeration. For instance, it was "wiser" to wash one's forearm to the elbow so as to make sure that one's hand is truly clean, as the Law insists on cleanliness of hands. A further nuance of this kind of thinking is the demand that one avoid sinners, especially in matters which suggest a sharing of ideas. This avoidance was often expressed, for brevity's sake, as "not fraternizing or associating with sinners, not going into their houses, and not eating with them"⁴. Such activities gave hint, it seems, that one approves the immoral life of sinners; one should not risk giving that approval. Business relationships were understandable, but familiarity in the usual activities that expressed unity — such was wrong. What also seems to lie behind this way of thinking about the possible influence of evil men upon good is nothing less than the large history of Israel; it seemed that every time a Jew would associate with "the impure", the Jew came away with a lessening of his devotion to Yahweh. Such associations should not be encouraged or even tolerated. Not only should one not suggest an indifference to the lives of sinners, but one should avoid them lest one fall into their sinfulness. Finally, how best to influence a change of behavior in sinners, if not to avoid them and so make them ever conscious of their sinfulness?

I. Jesus and Levi's guests (chap. 5)

Thus, when we consider the life of Jesus, it is not strange to find him criticized with the question, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?" (5,30)⁵. Jesus caused this question when he partook of a

betrayed our laws, no, not out of fear of death itself; I do not mean such an easy death as happens in battles, but that which comes with bodily torments, and seems to be the severest kind of death of all others. Now, I think those who have conquered us have put us to such deaths, not out of their hatred to us when they had subdued us, but rather out of their desire of seeing a surprising sight, which is this, whether there are such men in the world who believe that no evil is to them so great as to be compelled to do or to speak anything contrary to their own laws. Nor ought men to wonder at us, if we are more courageous in dying for our laws than all other men are". For a more accurate understanding of Josephus' remarks, cf. S. MASON, *Flavius Josephus on the Pharisees*. A composition-critical study (Leiden ²1991) and *Josephus and the New Testament* (Peabody, MA ²2003).

⁴ Cf. Lev 10,10: "You must distinguish between the holy and the common, between the unclean and the clean"; from this resulted "the Pharisaic idea of salvation by segregation", W. MANSON, *The Gospel of Luke* (MNTC; London 1948), 55; J. FITZMYER, *The Gospel of Luke I-IX* (AB 28, New York 1981) 589.

⁵ It is equally strange, and indeed ironic, that the Pharisees and others like them, did not seem to realize that they, too, were objects of Jesus' call to re-

significant dinner arranged by Levi (Matthew) in the wake of his obedience to the call of Jesus to him: "Follow me" ⁶. The response of Jesus to those finding fault with him for this meal fellowship explains the intention of Jesus here: "I have come to call sinners" (5,32). What is lacking, so to speak, though easily inferred, is that Jesus thinks that mingling with sinners and tax-collectors is a means to his goal, a method of leading these sinners to repentance ⁷. Jesus gives no explicit expression of this means to conversion, leaving the reader to supply for himself how just Jesus was in the way he chose to lead sinners to repentance ⁸. Certainly, there are no explicitly reported choices of means here to gain repentance from dinner guests, though obviously we should infer, without Luke's guidance, that Levi, the convener of the banquet, practices works indicative of repentance. Indeed, the purpose of the story focuses not on means, but rather on a proper answer to the question put to him, "Why ... ?" Jesus answered with "because" he, Son of Man, was sent to call sinners to repentance. His is a divine mission; this is his answer. But restricting himself to this "reason-for-acting" does not really explain why he has chosen this method to effect his desired result: why must he eat and drink with sinners in order to achieve his goal?

Here, we should put into play what we had discussed earlier, namely that the Pharisees, too, sought the conversion of sinners. They share the goal of Jesus; it is a question, then, of means. The Pharisees would never have considered Jesus' approach to sinners. Why not? We repeat reasons given earlier. It seems right to say that they, like many others, think that

pentance through eating and drinking with them. Certainly Jesus criticized these people, as Luke has indicated, at dinners with calls, indeed extensive calls, to change their ways (7,36-50; 11,37-52; 14,1-24). Who would understand better than they the value of repentance? Such repentance, however, did not include abandonment of their holy practices; as Jesus said: "Did not the maker of the outside also make the inside? But as to what is within, give alms, and behold, everything will be clean for you" (11,40-41). Jesus ate and drank with every type of sinner.

⁶ "In the criticism the present tense of the verb 'eats' ... implies a habitual eating with such people ... The criticism of Jesus may well have reached his ears already, since his attending such meals was a habitual practice", M. MULLINS *The Gospel of Luke* (Dublin 2010) 200.

⁷ "... in Luke's story the good news of Jesus' identification with sinful humanity is incomplete without the invitation to a reorienting of one's life", R. KARRIS, "The Gospel according to Luke", *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary* (eds. R.E. BROWN – J.A. FITZMYER – R.E. MURPHY) (Englewood Cliffs, NJ 1990) 693.

⁸ "Le verbe, ἐλήλυθα (v. 32), a ici un sens messianique, et qu'il soit employé à l'aoriste chez Marc et Mathieu et au parfait chez Luc, il embrasse toute la vie de Jesus", F. BOVON, *L'Évangile selon Saint Luc 1-9* (Commentaire du Nouveau Testament 3; Genève 1991) 252.

association with evil will inevitably make one evil. Moreover, what is the right way to bring a sinner to his senses? By fraternizing with him, and thus dulling in him criticism of his sinfulness, or segregation, which becomes a clear, silent statement of reproach by the community with the hope of embarrassment, or its like, and repentance?

However Luke's reader answers these questions about Jesus' conduct and remarks in this very brief story, it is equally clear that Jesus does not explain why he has chosen socialization with sinners as the proper means to their repentance; Luke's concern is to show explicitly that Jesus' goal is nothing less than the fulfillment of the divine command that he call sinners to repentance⁹. Thus, though one might ask the text why Jesus chose as his means a controversial practice such as eating with sinners and receive no clear answer, one does know he is putting to the text a question that the text was not constructed to answer.

We conclude: it is clear that we are given a reason why Jesus eats with sinners and tax collectors, but is his method to bring about repentance successful? Did repentance result from his fraternization with sinners? One might argue that logic assures us of the repentance of Levi, or one might argue that as the patient is cured only in the presence of the physician, so sinners are cured when Jesus is actually present with them. However, the value of Jesus' fraternization with sinners is not explicitly expressed; the passage is not interested in affirming the profit of Jesus' method and so we must look elsewhere in his public life to be satisfied.

II. Jesus and the People of this Generation (chap. 7)

In chap. 7 Luke again brings up the subject of Jesus' association with sinners with the description: "Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners" (7,34). This statement, which describes the opinion of the "people of this generation", comes at the end of a discourse which appeared directed elsewhere. Jesus had been asked if he was "the one to come", or not; as answer he pointed to the works he performed, works which Luke associated appositely with the prophetic words of Isaiah, presumably about "the one who is to come". After this answer, Jesus presents his understanding of the meaning of John the Baptist: a prophet, more than a prophet; indeed, "my messenger in front of you to prepare your way before you" (7,27). To this astounding revelation Jesus feels

⁹ "To appreciate the behavior of those under Jesus' sway involves seeing sinners as needy and able to be helped, rather than as contaminating and deserving to be spurned", J. NOLLAND, *Luke 1-9:20* (WBC 35a; Dallas, TX 1989) 246.

obliged to demur: great as John is, anyone who believes in Jesus (= “the least in the kingdom of heaven”) will have the greater reward.

This attention to “faith in Jesus” moves the discourse to include the moral plane. Luke himself interrupts Jesus’ speech to offer a summary of responses to the famed call of John to repentance; some indeed accepted his baptism, but certain religious leaders frustrated God’s plan for saving them¹⁰. It is in the light of this Lucan parenthesis that Jesus speaks again, to complain against the “people of this generation”. These people accept neither John nor Jesus, and reject them based on the conduct of each.

Presumably John’s call to repentance will not be accepted because he is possessed by Satan and so not from God; his way of life, the people of this generation say, proves this possession.

Jesus faces opposition and refusal for a different reason. He is not accused of being possessed by Satan (though on another occasion certain people said, “By the power of Beelzebul, the prince of demons, he drives out demons”, 11,15). His rejection is based on something else, namely the charge, “Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners” (7,34). One can say that such a charge comes purely from a refusal to repent, no matter the conduct of him who calls to repentance. We can add, however, that Jesus’ conduct was in such conflict with prevalent religious opinion and practice that faith in him was most unlikely¹¹. In the face of this criticism Jesus offers a wisdom saying that applies to his situation: “But wisdom is vindicated (declared just) by all her children” (7,35). This proverb, applicable to more than this one situation, suggests here that repentance proves that wisdom is truly wise. Religious leaders, as we have explained them, know that the repentant person is indeed a wise person, and fulfills God’s plan for salvation in Israel. Thus, it is to the result of Jesus’ methods for repentance that Jesus appeals; that is, look to the result of my association with sinners and learn from this result the positive value of the means which achieves this result, my befriending sinners and tax collectors. The argumentation is succinct, leaving the listener to work out its logic.

In brief, Jesus once again looks to his goal in conducting himself as he does, the goal of his mission as he speaks of it at the dinner with tax collectors and sinners (5,32). What Jesus offers now in chap. 7 is a proof that his method is justified, for, in a generalized statement in proverbial form, he points to a number of people who have done what God and Wisdom

¹⁰ The point had been made about sinners before the Gospel was written: “ἀγνοοῦντες γὰρ τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ δικαιοσύνην καὶ τὴν ἰδίαν [δικαιοσύνην] ζητοῦντες στήσαι, τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ τοῦ θεοῦ οὐχ ὑπετάγησαν” (Rom 10,3).

¹¹ “It is altogether clear that Jesus does not ‘stand off’ as he should (and as they do) by these standards [of the Pharisees based on texts of their Scriptures] and that, to this degree, in their eyes he lacks the comportment of one who is ‘righteous’”, D. JEFFREY, *Luke* (Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible; Grand Rapids, MI 2012) 191.

have asked: they have repented. And, as always, the repentant person was no less an interest for the "people of this age" who rejected John and Jesus because of their methods, both their call and their identities.

What might we make of the fact that immediately following Jesus' words we are to read the story about a sinner (ἁμαρτωλός) forgiven her sins and about a Pharisee who is little forgiven? It would not be amiss to note that we are presented with a repentant woman, which suggests that Jesus, so recently mentioned as a "friend of sinners and tax collectors", has success in his method of bringing about repentance. Certainly, the story means to exemplify the proverb, "Wisdom is justified by her children" ¹², but we cannot ignore the means whereby this child has justified Wisdom; also, we can presume a new moral life for this repentant woman.

Thus far, we have been given the motive for which Jesus associates with sinners, and a reference at least in a general way to the success of this association as found in the repentant who have responded to Jesus and to John, but we continue to look for an explicit example of repentance.

III. Jesus and the Pharisees and Sadducees (chap.15)

Once again, in chap. 15, we meet the same criticism against Jesus that he fraternizes with sinners; this time, the objection is phrased: "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them" (15,2). It is Pharisees and Sadducees who criticize now, and who make up part of the audience of Jesus; the other part is, indeed, sinners and tax collectors. Clearly, what Luke had offered his reader in chapters 5 and 7 did not exhaust his interest in this matter; the criticism deserves further reflection, and this time it will be with one of Jesus' favorite rhetorical methods: the parable.

Practically all of chap. 15 is a long presentation by Jesus, which consists of three parables with only occasional, but crucial, comment by him (vv. 7 and 10). The first two parables are strikingly similar in form, though not identical in content ¹³; quite different for a number of reasons is the third, that usually titled "The Prodigal Son" ¹⁴.

¹² NOLLAND, *Luke*, 353: "The touching display of affectionate gratitude shown to Jesus by this woman off the street well illustrates the claim of v. 35 that Wisdom is justified by her children".

¹³ Note for instance in the second parable the omitted reference to the "ninety-nine who seeing no finding" of the first parable. Perhaps this omission is explained by saying that the source for the first parable, but not the second, is drawn from Q.

¹⁴ "Doppelgleichnis und Sohnparabel, die inhaltlich verwandt waren, durch Unterstreichnung der Freude über das Wiedergefundene zur Apologie Jesu gegenüber Gegnern und zu einer Einladung zur Mitfreude zu machen", W. WIEFEL, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas* (THzNT 3; Berlin 1988) 281.

Looking to the first two parables, with an eye to the criticism against Jesus, we note two pertinent points. First, the shepherd, searches for his lost sheep till he finds it ¹⁵. Second, the shepherd in his joy at having found his sheep prepares a dinner at which he will rejoice with his friends and neighbors. The second parable presents a woman who, as the shepherd parable in its own way underlines, sweeps unceasingly till she finds her lost coin, and also invites friends to share a joyful dinner in celebration.

These two parables offer two lessons of interest to us. They show that it is unremitting searching that finds what was lost, not disinterest in or distance from sheep or coin. Certainly, leaving them lost achieves not a thing. Moreover, finding what was lost leads surely to great joy and celebration. The latter aspect, that of rejoicing over finding what was lost, confirms the value of searching, achieving happiness for going after what was lost till it is found. Indeed, one cannot imagine how else the sheep and the coin will be found except by continued searching. It is at the end of each of the parables that Jesus intervenes; both interventions make real what is only imaginary in the parables. Jesus, in his authoritative way, reveals the great joy among the angels at the finding of a sinner ¹⁶. Indeed, Jesus underlines in these first two parables of shepherd and sheep the joy of heaven over the repentance of the sinner, even once saying that “there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who have no need of repentance” (v. 7). One can mull over which is the greater point of these parables, unremitting search or joy at finding what was lost, but in relation to the criticism of Pharisees and Scribes (v. 2), it is clear that heaven itself reveals the rightness of the search for sinners and their repentance by revealing its joy at the success of the searchers. Indeed, the parables suggest that there is no other way but searching that can bring about repentance.

The third parable reinforces this point of the first two parables. True, there is no ‘searching’ after the lost son, and so the parallel with the first two parables is lacking on this crucial point. But there is no missing the repetition of Jesus’ teaching about the rejoicing due to repentance. Though some of Jesus’ audience may disagree with the lavishness of the father, no one would dispute the goodness of the father in his reception of his son ¹⁷; the father’s

¹⁵ πορεύεται ἐπὶ τὸ ἀπολωλὸς ἕως εὗρη αὐτό, v. 4.

¹⁶ ἐπὶ ἐνὶ ἁμαρτωλῷ μετανοοῦντι, vv. 7 and 10.

¹⁷ Cf. J.A. METZGER, *Consumption and Wealth in Luke’s Travel Narrative* (Leiden – Boston, MA 2008) 84-108. The father’s lavishness can cause Jesus’ audience to leave him, saying that “I know of no father so generous to a wayward son”. But the force behind the father’s actions is his realization, soon to be expressed, that “what was lost is found”, indeed “what was dead is alive”. Such an understanding of the situation might help listeners to adjust their judgment of the father favorably.

reasoning for his actions is not only convincing but revelatory. What was lost is now found, surely; but also what was dead now is alive.

Jesus is giving a profound explanation of the result of repentance, against which one should evaluate the search for repentance. It is a matter of life and death, nothing less. The Pharisees and Scribes will not disagree about the relationship between earthly repentance and heavenly joy, though its profundity can be hard to keep fresh in one's mind. On the basis of this one parable, so dramatically forceful, Jesus' critics see no relation between celebration and searching: the father does not search for his son. But the point is not there. This third parable means only to reinforce what the first two parables had made clear: whatever can produce joy in heaven is worth doing. One cannot prefer not searching after sinners, if one is convinced that such searching is the way, the best and necessary way, to produce joy, and life.

Chapter 15, the third attempt to answer the criticism that Jesus "welcomes sinners and eats with them", presents the justification for "searching". Let us ask again: can joy at finding justify the search? That heaven rejoices over the result of Jesus' winning over sinners is assurance that the means is justified by its effect. We should add to the praise of Wisdom by her children, then, the joyfulness of heaven as further proof that Jesus' way of trying to convert sinners to repentance is valid. Yet, it is reasonable to look for a teaching beyond parable; we look for a clear example of the effect of Jesus' fraternization with sinners.

IV. Jesus and Zacchaeus (chap. 19)

The fourth occurrence of this criticism, that Jesus 'fraternizes with sinners' in his public life, is in chap. 19; the complaint is this time from a crowd: "He has gone to stay at the house of a sinner" (v. 7), who, indeed, is a chief tax collector. Luke makes no mention of "eating and drinking", but such activity can be presumed from the word "stay" (μειναι), since one can assume such hospitality in this circumstance, given what we have read earlier. There are certain features of this story which distinguish it from the previous three examples already cited.

For the first time we have a real individual and situation before us; previously, we had groups mentioned, but no individual, and imagined figures in parable form. In addition, we have for the first time mentioned a general criticism of Jesus from a group traveling with him, not altogether the "people of this age". Also, the suggestion that we are to see a tight relationship between "salvation" ("Today salvation has come to this house") and repentance is, in the Gospel, first offered here. In addition, we read that Jesus "must stay" in Zacchaeus' house; this is similar to Jesus' earlier statement, that "he was sent" to call sinners, but δεῖ με μειναι (19,5) brings us much more directly into the sphere of the divine predestination which has determined all things.

For our purposes, the most striking feature we find in this story is the fact that we have been given a clear example of the result which comes from Jesus' fraternizing with sinners. Zacchaeus, a chief tax collector (= sinner), emerges from a time spent with Jesus and announces his intention of fulfilling the ideal of the law governing the return of stolen property¹⁸. Jesus' comments on this assurance of repentance is also a forceful claim which supports his earlier recognition of his mission to save the "lost", a neat literary reminder of Jesus' parables about the lost sheep, coin and son. There is no missing the obvious link of means and end, which was not absolutely, explicitly assured in the previous examples wherein Jesus was accused of doing wrong in associating with tax collectors and sinners.

A literary feature of Luke further draws our attention to the point under consideration here. Just after our author notes how Zacchaeus hurried from his perch in the tree to welcome Jesus joyfully, the crowd as critics is introduced. One can, with a certain logic, expect that this look to the criticism of the crowd¹⁹ interferes with the development of the story, a development which should assure that the reception of Jesus will be followed without "distraction" by the response of Zacchaeus about his repentance. Yet if the purpose of the story, as we think it does, includes a sign of repentance as justification for Jesus' lodging with a sinner, the logic of the story as it stands is quite acceptable and sensible²⁰.

It also seems best to say that the disposition of Zacchaeus before his moment of repentance was a "benevolent" curiosity. There is no clear indication that Zacchaeus' desire and effort to "see" Jesus actually concealed an incipient repentance. No, it is only the actual time spent with Jesus that accounts for repentance.

¹⁸ Exodus 21,1, Lev 6,5, and Num 5,6-7 are examples of the sense of retribution that explains the kind of repentance Zacchaeus expresses.

¹⁹ L.T. JOHNSON, *The Gospel of Luke* (Sacra Pagina; Collegeville, MN 1991) 285, comments that the clause ἰδόντες πάντες διεγόγγυζον (v.7) "would include the disciples and the crowd and the opponents", since "all" complained. It seems better to say that "all" is one of many examples of Lucan writing which should not be taken at face value; since the story's only expressed precedent for πάντες is ὄχλου (v. 3), it seems right to conclude that it is the "crowd", which had not experienced Jesus' earlier associations with sinners and tax collectors, that complains.

²⁰ "[Zacchaeus'] use of the present tense in 'I'm giving' and 'I'm paying back' for what he has yet to do emphasizes that these actions are so sure and soon to be done that they're as good as in process right now", R. GUNDRY, *Commentary on the New Testament* (Peabody, MA 2010) 316. For a discussion of the interpretations of the words of Zacchaeus in regard to the time of his monetary expression of repentance, cf. L. TICHY, "Was hat Zachäus geantwortet? (Lk 19,8)?" , *Bib* 92 (2011) 21-38.

Four times Luke presents disagreement, if not conflict, over Jesus' practice of eating with sinners and tax collectors, of fraternizing with these people beyond what "the pious" would be allowed to do. He is brought to task by no one group, but by a variety of critics: Pharisees and their Scribes (5,30), people of this generation (7,31), Pharisees and Scribes (15,2) and a crowd (19,7); the Pharisees, it is clear, are his major opponents in this matter. Each of Luke's stories containing Jesus' eating with sinners and fraternizing with them has, as part of the narration, a justification of Jesus' practice. Luke intends to show not only that Jesus has acted correctly before sinners, but preferably so.

With the Levi incident we have clearly the purpose for which Jesus is engaged in what might, within traditional Jewish moral traditions, be considered against Jewish practice and the Divine Will. Indeed, it is by that Divine Will that he explains his action as obedience. Also present is the suggestion that Levi (possibly others) has repented and begun to show a moral change, but this is left to the judgment of the reader and not demonstrated, for the moral life is not a concern of this story.

The second reference of interest comes from a description, presumably true, of "this generation": it charges Jesus with eating and consorting with sinners. In this case, such a conduct is reason for not having faith in Jesus, for such conduct is not approved by God. This story affords Luke the opportunity to argue that Jesus does indeed achieve God's desire for repentance; one need only to look to the repentant to find one who has become God's child. No attempt is made or need be made to cite examples of repentance; it is enough to give the reason that justifies Jesus' conduct.

The third moment of this repeated criticism occurs when, in pursuit of sinners' repentance, Jesus is observed by Pharisees and Scribes to 'welcome sinners and eat with them' (15,2). This criticism introduces three famous parables. This trio of imaginary stories shows no interest in detailing repentant morality²¹; what it does is show the results of repentance, particularly from the viewpoint of Heaven. These parables are meant to encourage those sinners who listen favorably to Jesus, but equally they are meant to make clear to Jesus' critics the supreme value of his efforts to encourage repentance. True, there is the young son who for his less than exalted reasons seeks forgiveness, but the parables do not describe morality which is the fruit of repentance. For such a description we must look elsewhere. Here, however, we do learn to understand and appreciate the single-minded goodness of Jesus.

²¹ The immediacy with which the story of the Pharisee and forgiven woman follows upon Jesus' response to the criticism of "this generation" indicates that Luke means to show the fruit of Jesus' preaching repentance to this woman; she is, in other words, a fine example of the children who justify Wisdom — yet she is not pictured as is Zacchaeus, who follows his repentance with practice.

Finally, we reach the story of Zacchaeus, who, after Jesus spends time with him in Zacchaeus' house near Jericho, gives significant proof of the effect of association with Jesus. Luke prefers here to finally describe what this new moral life will exhibit: "Behold, half of my possessions, Lord, I shall give to the poor, and if I have extorted anything from anyone I shall repay it four times over" (19,8). Attention to financial reparation fits admirably with Luke's own recognized interest in the right use of riches, but one can assume that other virtuous actions urged in Jesus' teaching in the Gospel will form part of this repentant sinner. So, Zacchaeus will act justly and recompense those he has cheated. With this story in place, one finally reads what he has all along supposed or expected from Jesus' familiarity with sinners: his method has produced the fruit of repentance which is a convincing proof that Jesus has been correct to associate with sinners.

Luke has made clear from early in the public life (5,32; cf. 4,18-19) that Jesus has been aware of his divine calling to ask that sinners repent; it is the privileged way to lead people into the kingdom, the announcement of which Jesus must ²² preach. Though all four stories about the purpose of Jesus' fraternization with sinners can argue Jesus' correctness, it is the Zacchaeus story which finally justifies Jesus before his critics (the "proof that is in the pudding", so to speak), thereby revealing a convincing element of the innocence of Jesus before God and Israel, which helps complete the defense of Jesus as the one who knows best both God's plan for salvation and how to achieve it.

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SUMMARY

All Jewish religious teachers wanted sinners to repent; how one achieves this was disputed, as was Jesus' choosing to associate with sinners in their houses and at their meals. Four times Luke describes Jesus as fraternizing with sinners, which violated Jewish pious practice. The first three times (chaps. 5, 7 and 15) Jesus underlines his motive for this conduct and its value; the fourth time (chap. 19), and rather late in the Gospel, Luke shows that indeed Jesus' method proved true, i.e. the wisdom of his conduct was shown justified by repentant children of God.

²² δει (4,43) signals the profound divine intention in sending Jesus to announce the kingdom of God. Repentance, which Jesus has been sent to inspire, is the primary and subordinate means by which this divine plan is achieved. With the forgiveness of sins we are far beyond the 'Jubilee Year' category by which some interpret Jesus' self-identification through the words of Isaiah (4,18-19).

The Meaning of τοῖς ἀκούσασιν at Hebrews 4,2

At Heb 4,2 occur the apparently innocuous words τοῖς ἀκούσασιν. But even a cursory check of the literature shows how difficult the words are to interpret¹. Much of the difficulty arises from the rest of the verse, which is also far from clear. The present note will attempt to give a plausible explanation of τοῖς ἀκούσασιν in the context of the entire verse. The text adopted will be that of the 27th edition of Nestle – Aland: καὶ γὰρ ἔσμεν εὐηγγελισμένοι καθάπερ καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι ἀλλ' οὐκ ὠφέλησεν ὁ λόγος τῆς ἀκοῆς ἐκείνους μὴ συγκεκρασμένους τῇ πίστει τοῖς ἀκούσασιν².

I. Selected Opinions

One common view, based on the best manuscript reading συγκεκρασμένους, is that the words “for those who (had) heard” (τοῖς ἀκούσασιν) refer to Joshua and Caleb³. These two represent the believing minority who, in contrast to the majority of the Israelites of the desert generation, did believe. The point would be that the word, though heard, did not meet with a believing response on the part of the majority. The difficulty with this view is that the previous verse (4,1) seems to presuppose that no one in the desert generation believed, for the promise to all of them, majority and minority alike, remained unrealized⁴. Further, the connotation of the

¹ For a discussion of the various opinions cf. P. ELLINGWORTH, *The Epistle to the Hebrews. A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGNTC; Grand Rapids, MI – Carlisle 1993) 240-244.

² For a defense of the reading cf. H.W. ATTRIDGE, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia, PA 1989) 122. Cf. also B.M. METZGER, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament. A Companion Volume to the United Bible Societies' Greek New Testament*. (London – New York 1971) 665.

³ W.L. LANE, *Hebrews 1–8* (WBC 47A; Dallas, TX 1991) 93. Cf. also C. MARCHESELLI-CASALE, *Lettera agli Ebrei* (I Libri Biblici. Nuovo Testamento 16; Milano 2005) 219-220; C. SPICQ, *L'Épître aux Hébreux. II. Commentaire* (EB; Paris 1953) 81.

⁴ In subsequent discussion Joshua is explicitly mentioned, of course (4,8 — Ἰησοῦς but the point there is that even though Joshua believed, he could not enter the rest of God. What is more, the author of Hebrews emphasizes that Joshua not only did not but could not enter into God's rest, for the promise (under the image of God's Sabbath rest) still remains even though Joshua had faith and did what God commanded.

word "hear" in the phrase τοῖς ἀκούσασιν is effective hearing, i.e., obedience, and not just physical hearing.

Another view based on the reading συγκεκρασμένους is that the words τοῖς ἀκούσασιν refer not to anyone of the desert generation but to the Christian author and addressees of the epistle ⁵. But if the words refer to the Christians, it is not clear what point the author is trying to make; it is rather banal to say that the desert generation should have had faith as the Christians do. And even if he is making such a banal point, it is not clear why he has used such an elaborate way to say it, using the verb συγκεράννυμι ⁶.

Another view, based on the reading συγκεκρασμένους, is that the words τοῖς ἀκούσασιν should be construed as a dative of advantage, "for the benefit of those who had heard". This interpretation, however, relies on a textual variant that lacks strong support in the manuscript tradition ⁷.

The identity of those referred to by the words τοῖς ἀκούσασιν, is of secondary importance, since the main point would be to emphasize for the Christian addressees the importance of individual responsibility ⁸. But in the discussions of the possible persons referred to by the words τοῖς ἀκούσασιν one group of persons prominent in the epistle has been ignored.

II. Another Suggested Interpretation

Four elements regarding 4,2 need explaining with regard to a basic understanding of the words "those who (had) heard" (τοῖς ἀκούσασιν): 1) the identity of "those who (had) heard"; 2) the nature of "the word heard" (ὁ λόγος τῆς ἀκοῆς); 3) the precise force of the phrase μὴ συγκεκρασμένους τῇ πίστει; 4) the meaning in the context of καὶ γὰρ ἔσμεν εὐηγγελισμένοι καθάπερ κάκεῖνοι.

1) "Those who (had) heard" must refer to a group other than the group referred to by the word ἀκούσαντες in 3,16, i.e., the desert generation, all of whom rebelled ⁹. That is, they "heard" in the sense only of becoming aware of the message, not in the sense of also obeying what they had heard. For the ἀκούσαντες of 3,16 did not believe whereas the ἀκούσαντες of 4,2, by implication, did.

At first glance, given the fact that the immediately preceding verse implies that no one of the desert generation believed, the ἀκούσαντες of 4,2

⁵ This view is advanced by ATTRIDGE, *Hebrews*, 125-126.

⁶ "This is the least unsatisfactory interpretation, but the possibility of primitive corruption is not to be ruled out ..." (ELLINGWORTH, *Hebrews*, 243).

⁷ ELLINGWORTH, *Hebrews*, 243. Ellingworth himself does not hold this view.

⁸ Cf. SPICQ, *L'Épître aux Hébreux*, 81.

⁹ For the sake of the argument the minority who did believe is ignored by the author of Hebrews, as explained above.

would seem to refer to the Christian addressees. The verse immediately following verse 4,2, verse 4,3, states: “for we are entering into the rest” (εἰσερχόμεθα γὰρ εἰς τὴν κατὰπαυσιν). The difficulty with this interpretation (besides those mentioned above) is that the words τοῖς ἀκούσασιν in their context refer to the third person plural: the author in the context habitually uses the first person when referring to the Christian addressees so as to include himself (cf. the use of the first person in vv. 1, 2 and 3 — φοβηθῶμεν, ἔσμεν and εἰσερχόμεθα). If the author had understood τοῖς ἀκούσασιν as referring to the addressees and himself he would more naturally, judging by the way he speaks in the context, have said ἡμῖν τοῖς ἀκούσασιν, or used some other expression to indicate the first person. The inference is that τοῖς ἀκούσασιν refers to a group different not only from the desert generation but also from the Christian addressees and the author.

The use of the article with reference to the group indicated by the words τοῖς ἀκούσασιν indicates that the same group was mentioned previously in the epistle or is well known to the addressees and/or to the author, or both. This would seem to indicate the group of first-generation Christians who are described as the ones who “heard” (ἀκούσαντες) the Lord speaking (cf. 2,3). They not only “heard” in the sense of becoming aware but “heard” in the sense of obeying, for they passed on what they heard to “us” as something so important that it demanded validation. As interpreted by the present writer, that which the first generation of Christians “heard” were the words of institution of the Eucharist which, in 2,4, is viewed as the presence of God among the Christians as they take part in the new exodus¹⁰. The implication in Heb 4,2, then, would seem to be that the Israelites in the desert generation cannot enter into God’s promised rest, even though they received such a promise just as the Christians have, because they were not linked in faith with the first Christians and with the words of the Eucharist, i.e., they were not linked with the Eucharist itself. But it remains to be seen just why this is so.

2) “The word heard” (ὁ λόγος τῆς ἀκοῆς) can be understood in either an active or passive sense: either “hearing the word” or “the word they heard”¹¹. The latter, passive sense, seems indicated on the basis of the use of the word λόγος in the epistle. At Heb 2,2 λόγος is used of the Mosaic Law, “spoken” (λαλέω) “through” (διὰ) angels. In the same passage the Mosaic Law is explicitly contrasted with what was “spoken” (λαλέω) “through” (διὰ) the Lord. The reason for this is to indicate that God is really the ultimate one responsible for both the Mosaic Law and the Eucharist.

¹⁰ Cf. J. SWETNAM, “Τῶν λαληθησομένων in Hebrews 3,5”, *Bib* 90 (2009) 90 and 98-99.

¹¹ Cf. ELLINGWORTH, *Hebrews*, 242. The present writer has substituted “word” for Ellingworth’s “message” as being a more literal translation of λόγος.

This becomes clear from the way the thematic word λαλέω is used in Heb 1,2. Further, based on the way the word λαλέω is used in Heb 1,2 it is clear that the speaking “in” (ἐν) the Son is more important than the speaking “in” (ἐν) prophets in that the former is the “final and decisive” speaking in God’s dealings with humanity ¹².

Given this background it is instructive to see how the author of Hebrews views the terminus of God’s speaking “through” the angels, i.e., with regard to the Mosaic Law. He views it as a “word” (λόγος): ὁ δι’ ἀγγέλων λαληθεὶς λόγος (Heb 2,2). Further, this λόγος, though ending up as a “book” (βιβλίον, Heb 9,19), was spoken (λαλέω) by Moses to all the people (Heb 9,19). The Mosaic Law, then, would seem to be the ὁ λόγος τῆς ἀκοῆς, “the word heard”, by the desert generation. It contained the promises of entrance into the land which was the goal of their wandering. In Heb 3,16 those who rebelled are said to have been the ones who, having “heard” (ἀκούσαντες), had gone out of Egypt through the instrumentality of Moses. Heb 3,16 thus supports the interpretation of ὁ λόγος τῆς ἀκοῆς given above.

The problem now is to identify in the epistle the term of God’s parallel speaking “through the Lord” in the words of the institution of the Eucharist. In the context of Heb 4,2 the word λόγος appears at Heb 4,11-12 ¹³. The present writer has long argued for the minority interpretation of this word in the latter two verses in the sense of λόγος of the Johannine prologue ¹⁴. In addition to the arguments involving the immediate context of Heb 4,12-13 indicating that the λόγος of Heb 4,12 is not the word of Scripture, the above argumentation involving the parallelism between the terminus of God’s speaking “through” the angels and “in” Moses and “through” and “in” the Son should now be considered. ὁ λόγος τῆς ἀκοῆς as involving the Son should be somehow intrinsically superior to ὁ λόγος τῆς ἀκοῆς involving Scripture, for the speaking in the Son is “final and decisive”, as the thematic prologue of the epistle makes clear. Thus, on the supposition

¹² “The final and decisive address of God to humanity occurs not ‘of old’ but, literally, ‘at the end of these days’ The lively sense that the author and his community live at the final point of God’s dealing with humanity is not, of course, unique, but is shared by Jewish apocalyptists and by many early Christians” (ATTRIDGE, *Hebrews*, 39). In support of this view Attridge refers to Heb 9,6-10 and 10,25. He could also have cited Heb 3,1-6 and the radically different roles of Moses and Jesus as Servant “in” the house and Son “over” the house in the context of the use of the verb λαλέω by Moses at 3,5.

¹³ Noted by LANE, *Hebrews* 1-8, 98.

¹⁴ J. SWETNAM, “Jesus as λόγος” in *Hebrews* 4,12-13”, *Bib* 62 (1981) 214-224; ID., “The Context of the Crux at *Hebrews* 5,7-8”, *Filologia Neotestamentaria* 14 (2001) 103-107; ID., “A Close Reading of *Hebrews* 3,7-4,11 and *Logos* as Christ in *Hebrews* 4,12”, *Melita Theologica* 58 (2007) 43-51. Of course others have held this view long before the present writer.

that the λόγος of Heb 4,12 is the ὁ λόγος τῆς ἀκοῆς of Heb 4,2, the interpretation that it is the word of Scripture is clearly untenable, given the superiority of God's speaking in a son, as indicated in Heb 1,1-2. What is indicated is that the Word in the sense of the Johannine prologue is, possibly, the λόγος of ὁ λόγος τῆς ἀκοῆς.

In the context of the above argumentation, Heb 13,7 is particularly suggestive: Μνημονεύετε τῶν ἡγουμένων ὑμῶν, οἵτινες ἐλάλησαν ὑμῖν τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ, ὡν ἀναθεωροῦντες τὴν ἑκβάσιν τῆς ἀναστροφῆς μιμῆσθε τὴν πίστιν. The present writer has argued that chap. 13 can be plausibly interpreted in a way which evokes both the *tôdâ* ceremony of the Old Testament liturgy¹⁵ and the rite of the Latin Mass¹⁶. In this interpretation Heb 13,7 refers to the celebrants of the Christian Eucharist as "leaders" because they are leading the Christians on their new, spiritual exodus to God's rest of eternal life (cf. Heb 2,1-4). The λόγος they "speak" (λαλέω) is the Word, i.e., Christ himself. This interpretation explains the otherwise rather arbitrary introduction in the following verse of "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today and for the ages". The word "same" (αὐτός) alludes to the αὐτός of Heb 1,12, where it indicates in the context the unchanging nature of Christ as God. In Hebrews the verse refers to the unchanging nature of the Eucharistic Christ, whether "spoken" by the leaders in the past (13,7), the present (13,17), or the future. The implication that they are deceased suggests that they probably belonged to the first generation of Christians¹⁷. The explicit mention of "faith" (πίστις) reminds the addressees of the necessary condition for their being linked with the leaders. A plausible case can be made, then, based on the use of the word λόγος in Hebrews, that the λόγος of ὁ λόγος τῆς ἀκοῆς at Heb 4,2, refers to Christ Himself in the Eucharist.

3) The precise force of the phrase μὴ συγκεκρασμένους τῇ πίστει would seem to depend in no small measure on the connotations of the word συγκεράνυμι. In classical Greek the word is used of mixing substances, such

¹⁵ In support of the evocation of the *tôdâ* ceremony as a background for the Christian Eucharist cf. J. RATZINGER, *Das Fest des Glaubens. Versuche zur Theologie des Gottesdienstes* (Einsiedeln 1981) 47-54. Ratzinger has nothing to say about a possible relation between the *tôdâ* ceremony and Hebrews 13. But his comments about the value of the *tôdâ* ceremony for understanding the Christian Eucharist are clear: "... der enge Zusammenhang zwischen Todaopfer und Eucharistie, zwischen Todafrömmigkeit und Christologie, scheint mir vollkommen gesichert" (54).

¹⁶ For the views of the present writer on Hebrews 13 cf. J. SWETNAM, "A Liturgical Approach to Hebrews 13", *Letter and Spirit* 2 (2006) 159-173; ID., "A Liturgical Approach to Hebrews 13", *The Incarnate Word* 1 (2006) 3-17 (a shorter but clearer version of the previous article by the same name).

¹⁷ Cf. ATTRIDGE, *Hebrews*, 391.

as colors, and, figuratively, of close union between persons¹⁸. In the Septuagint it corresponds to the *hithpael* of the Hebrew verb עָרַב which means “to establish a society, to make an agreement, to contract a marriage”. That is to say, to enter into a close union between or among persons¹⁹.

In the context of the explanation given above about the other words of Heb 4,2, then, the meaning would be that the Israelites of the first Exodus were unable to enter into God’s rest because they were not united in faith with the first Christians who had heard the words of institution of the Eucharist. That is, they did not have the living presence of the Word with them on their journey. The intention of the author of Hebrews, obviously, is not to blame but to explain. The point is to emphasize for the addressees that if they remain united in faith with the Eucharistic Word which accompanies them on their new, spiritual exodus to God’s eternal rest, they will infallibly enter into that rest. Success for the group is certain; failure is possible only for the individual who falls away from the group (cf. 3,12.13; 4,1.11)²⁰. The certainty of arrival into God’s rest for the Christians is, then, *de iure* and not *de facto*²¹. This corresponds to the pride of place given in Heb 1,1-2 to the “speaking” of the Father in the Son, in contrast to his speaking in the prophets. His final and definitive speaking in a son (the lack of an article emphasizes the role of son as son, i.e., legitimacy) suggests that this speaking is on a completely different level from previous speakings²². Faith is an essential condition for entrance, but faith is not the cause of entrance: Jesus Christ in his Eucharistic presence and all that that implies is the cause. It is he and he alone who makes possible, under God, the fulfillment of the promise of land made to Abraham. (Cf. Gal 3,16.)

4) The meaning of the words introducing 4,2 have to be evaluated not only in the light of 4,1 but also in the light of the rest of the words of 4,2. The words καὶ γὰρ ἐσμεν εὐηγγελισμένοι καθάπερ κἀκεῖνοι may be translated

¹⁸ Cf. ELLINGWORTH, *Hebrews*, 243.

¹⁹ Cf. SPICQ, *L'Épître aux Hébreux*, 81.

²⁰ Cf. SWETNAM, “A Close Reading of Hebrews”, 44.

²¹ Those who interpret the “word” which is being obeyed by the Christians as the word of God in Scripture would seem to be obliged to fall into the *de facto* camp. For faith would seem to be of its nature a condition and not a cause, and the cause of success in the case of both the desert generation and the Christian generation remains the same.

²² On the emphasis which the author of Hebrews gives to God’s speaking in a son as contrasted to his speaking in the prophets cf. ATTRIDGE, *Hebrews*, 39. Attridge adds “God, moreover, speaks through this Son not only in word but in deed, in the entirety of the Christ-event, providing for humanity atonement for sin and an enduring covenant relationship” (39). Attridge could have noted that Christ himself becomes the new covenant, as the parallel between the λόγος which is the Mosaic Law and Christ as the Eucharistic New Covenant in Heb 2,1-4 suggests.

“for we also have received the good news just as they”. The γάρ indicates a relationship between the previous verse and what follows. This good news must involve the “promise” (ἐπαγγελία) of 4,1 which, in turn, involves entrance into God’s rest²³. The change from ἐπαγγελία to εὐαγγελίζομαι suggests that the author of Hebrews is reminding the addressees that the promise was received by them differently from the way it was received by the desert generation. The promise of entering into God’s rest was originally made to Abraham, as is explicitly recognized by the author of Hebrews in Heb 11,9²⁴.

The addressees were well aware of the role of Abraham in their lives and that they were associated with him through faith (cf. Heb 2,16; 6,13; 7,1-9; 11,8-19): it is through faith and the lack of faith that the author of Hebrews approaches the whole question of God’s promise to Abraham of entrance into the land in Heb 3,7-4,12, as the interpretation given by the author of Hebrews to the thematic citation of Psalm 95 in Heb 3,13 makes clear.

The present writer has interpreted Heb 2,5-3,6 in terms of faith involving Abraham and involving Jesus. In this interpretation the author of Hebrews understands the “seed” (σπέρμα) of Abraham in 2,16 just as Paul does in Galatians 4 and Romans 5, i.e. to be that of all those who believed as Abraham believed. The context suggests that faith is directed to overcoming the fear of another’s death, as Abraham did in Genesis 22 (cf. Heb 2,15; 11,19). But the addressees also have faith in the face of their own deaths, thus sharing in the faith of Jesus before his death²⁵. As applied to Heb 4,1-2, the desert generation received the promise of entrance into the land from the reading of the Mosaic Law by Moses (cf. Heb 9,19), whereas the Christian addressees received the good news which involves the promise of entering into eternal life from the risen Christ in the context of the Eucharist (Heb 2,5-13a) and thus ultimately from the words of institution of the Eucharist itself which were corroborated by the resurrection²⁶. The addressees received the promise of entering into God’s rest just as the Israelites of the desert generation did, but it was received in a different way, not as spoken by Moses but, ultimately, as spoken by Christ, to whom they were linked by faith through the first Christians who heard him. Thus the

²³ “... the context suggests that the implied ‘good news’ is closely linked with the ‘promise’ of v. 1, and so with the ‘resting place’ of v. 3 and the wider context” (ELLINGWORTH, *Hebrews*, 241).

²⁴ In his comments on Heb 11,9, Ellingworth observes: “Canaan is indeed the land which God has promised to Abraham and his descendants, yet it does not exhaust the significance of his promise, as vv. 10, 13-17 [sc. in chap. 11] will make clear” (ELLINGWORTH, *Hebrews*, 583). The text of Genesis was certainly familiar to the addressees, as the frequent citations and allusions in Hebrews to the Abraham cycle show.

²⁵ Cf. SWETNAM, “‘Εξ ἐνός in Hebrews 2,11”, 519-524.

²⁶ Cf. J. SWETNAM, “The Crux at Hebrews 2,9 in Its Context”, *Bib* 91 (2010) 103-111, especially 105.

phrase καὶ γάρ ἐσμεν εὐηγγελισμένοι καθάπερ κἀκεῖνοι matches the words τοῖς ἀκούσασιν: both parts of the verse involve contact with the Eucharist and, through the Eucharist, with the living Christ.

Just how the Eucharist and the living Christ make possible *de iure* certitude is beyond the scope of this note to elucidate, but an important element in the explanation is the understanding of the οἶκος in Heb 3,1-6 and its relation to the Eucharist and Jesus' superiority as Son over Moses ²⁷, with particular emphasis on 3,6.

* *

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The reflections above are an attempt to come to terms with the, at first sight, innocuous words τοῖς ἀκούσασιν of Heb 4,2. The conclusion reached was that the words refer to the group of Christians who heard with faith the words of the Lord as he instituted the Eucharist. The argumentation relied heavily on the present writer's attempts to solve other *crucis* in the epistle. All were affected to a greater or less extent by the present writer's conviction that the Eucharist plays a major role in the epistle, based on his use of the Jewish ceremony of the *tôdâ*, which seems a key element for understanding Hebrews 13. Given the fact that the majority of commentators on Hebrews think that the Eucharist is of little or no relevance for understanding the epistle, the argumentation has the air of being convoluted and arcane. But if it is not taken as the least implausible explanation offered, the *crux* posed by τοῖς ἀκούσασιν remains.

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SUMMARY

The words τοῖς ἀκούσασιν in Heb 4,2 are frequently taken as referring either to the Israelites of the desert generation who, in contrast to the majority, did believe in God's care, or to the Christians who, in contrast to the desert generation, do believe. After indicating why each interpretation is unsatisfactory, the note argues from the wording of the entire verse in the context of the epistle as a whole that the words refer to the Christians who heard the words of the Lord as he instituted the Eucharist. He is the one who, through the linkage of faith, makes entrance into God's rest possible.

²⁷ Cf. J. Swetnam, "Τῶν λαληθησομένων in Hebrews 3,5", 95-96; Id., "ὁ ἀπόστολος in Hebrews 3,1", *Bib* 89 (2008) 252-262

RECENSIONES

Vetus Testamentum

John H. CHOI, *Traditions at Odds*. The Reception of the Pentateuch in Biblical and Second Temple Literature (Library of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 518). New York – London, T&T Clark, 2010. ix-278 p. 15,5 x 24. £ 70.00

Diese überarbeitete Fassung einer unter David H. Aaron (Hebrew Union College) geschriebenen Dissertation widmet sich der interessanten Frage wie autoritativ der Pentateuch in der persischen und hellenistischen Zeit war. Choi vertritt die These, dass im entstehenden Judentum der Pentateuch keine absolute Autorität besaß, sondern dass es eine Vielzahl von Überlieferungen gab und dass sogenannte Pentateuchthemen in den Propheten und Schriften, sowie in außerbiblischen Texten keine direkte Aufnahme von Texten aus dem Pentateuch implizieren. Es handelt sich in vielen Fällen um Variationen bestimmter Traditionen oder Rituale, die unabhängig vom Pentateuch verschriftet wurden. Demzufolge sollte die Urkundenhypothese aufgegeben werden (was in der deutschsprachigen Forschung, mit welcher der Autor kaum vertraut ist, zu einem großen Teil bereits der Fall ist) und durch ein “model of composition that recognizes the temporal proximity of the composition of the individual units of the Pentateuch, and its final composition into a set of five books” (244) ersetzt werden.

Nach einer methodologischen Einleitung untersucht der Autor zunächst Fest- und Ritualvorschriften in den verschiedenen Gesetzestexten des Pentateuchs und anderen biblischen und nicht-biblischen Texten und kommt, gegen die gängige Meinung, zu dem Ergebnis, dass die zu beobachtenden Varianten nicht mit literarischer Abhängigkeit von älteren Texten zu erklären sind (der Verfasser des deuteronomischen Gesetzes hat das Bundesbuch benutzt und neu interpretiert, der Verfasser des Heiligkeitgesetzes hat versucht, die ihm vorliegenden deuteronomistischen und priesterlichen Texte zu harmonisieren und zu aktualisieren), sondern dass die verschiedenen Festvorschriften gleichzeitig und voneinander unabhängig entstanden sind. Man mag Choi zugestehen, dass die Erwähnungen von Festen und Sabbat in Texten außerhalb des Pentateuch nicht direkt von den Texten der Thora abhängig sein müssen. Allerdings fehlen methodologische Überlegungen zur Zusammenstellung verschiedener Gesetzestexte innerhalb des Pentateuchs. Soll man davon ausgehen, dass Sammlungen wie das Bundesbuch, das deuteronomische Gesetz, die priesterlichen Vorschriften und das Heiligkeitgesetz

alle zur gleichen Zeit und voneinander unabhängig entstanden sind? Es ist bedauerlich, dass Choi nicht auf neuere Untersuchungen zum Heiligkeitsetz eingeht und wichtige Beiträge zu seiner eigenen Fragestellung (wie z.B. E. Otto, «Innerbiblische Exegese im Heiligkeitsetz Levitikus 17-26», *Levitikus als Buch* [eds. H.-J. Fabry – H.-W. Jüngling; BBB 119; Berlin 1999] 125-196, oder C. Nihan, «The Holiness Code between D and P: Some Comments on the Function and Significance of Leviticus 17-26 in the Composition of the Torah», *Das Deuteronomium zwischen Pentateuch und Deuteronomistischem Geschichtswerk* [eds. E. Otto – R. Achenbach; FRLANT 206; Göttingen 2004] 81-122) unberücksichtigt lässt. Choi betont zu Recht, dass die Elephantine-Papyri, das Jubiläenbuch und auch Texte aus Qumran in Bezug auf Feste und deren Daten oft eigene Wege gehen, was in der Tat darauf hinweist, dass das im Entstehen begriffene Judentum keineswegs ein monolithischer Block war. Diese Einsicht ist aber weniger neu als von Choi behauptet wird.

Im folgenden Kapitel beschäftigt sich der Autor mit Abrissen von Israels "geschichtlichen" Traditionen außerhalb des Pentateuchs. Nach einer etwas langatmigen Diskussion über Geschichtsschreibung, die mit einer "recognition of the centrality of ideology" (116) endet, untersucht Choi zunächst die historischen Psalmen 78, 105, 106 (warum nicht auch 136 und andere Texte?) sowie Jos 24, Ez 20 und Neh 9. Er betrachtet alle die hier vorliegenden Geschichtssummarien als unabhängig von den Texten des Pentateuchs, was m. E. kaum möglich ist. Dass die untersuchten Texte nicht alle Themen der Pentateucherzählung wiedergeben und dass sie in bestimmter Hinsicht auch von dieser abweichen bedeutet nicht, dass die Pentateucherzählungen unbekannt waren. Choi postuliert für die Pentateucherzählungen und die Geschichtssummarien eine gemeinsame Quelle ein "cultural repertoire" (124, 127). Leider erfährt man nicht, wie man sich dieses Repertoire vorzustellen hat. Natürlich kann man (und sollte man) davon ausgehen, dass die Verfasser von Ps 78, 105 und 106 die Thora nicht unbedingt vor Augen hatten, als sie ihre Texte verfassten; allerdings waren sie wohl doch (zumindest im Fall von Ps 105) mit den großen narrativen Themen, die auch dem Pentateuch zugrunde liegen, vertraut. Die Diskussion von Jos 24 zeigt, dass Choi mit der aktuellen Diskussion um diesen Text nicht vertraut ist. Er stellt fest, dass Jos 24 traditionell "E" bzw. "J" zugeschrieben wurde, und danach als ein dtr Produkt angesehen wurde (131). Seit mehr als zwanzig Jahren steht Jos 24 aber im Zentrum einer Debatte um die Alternative Hexa- bzw. Pentateuch, wobei die Frage verhandelt wird, ob Jos 24 nicht dafür konzipiert wurde, das Buch Josua als Abschluss der Thora zu verstehen, indem hier nämlich Josua als ein zweiter Mose erscheint und mit diesem parallelisiert wird (vgl. u. a. M. Anbar, *Josué et l'alliance de Sichem. Josué 24:1-28* [BET 25; Frankfurt/M. et al., 1992]; T. Römer – M. Z. Brettler, «Deuteronomy 34 and the Case for a Persian Hexateuch», *JBL* 119 (2000) 401-419; E.

Blum, «The Literary Connection Between the Books of Genesis and Exodus and the End of the Book of Joshua», *A Farewell to the Yahwist? The Composition of the Pentateuch in Recent European Interpretation* [eds. T. B. Dozeman – K. Schmid; SBL Symposium Series 34; Atlanta, GA 2006] 89-106). Es ist bedauerlich, dass Choi diese für sein Thema überaus wichtige Fragestellung ignoriert. Jos 24 ist demnach nicht unabhängig vom Pentateuch entstanden (so Choi 131), sondern als ein Gegenentwurf zu diesem. Leider hat Choi die interessante Parallele zum Götzendienst der Väter „auf der anderen Seite des Flusses“ (Jos 24,2) übersehen. Dieses Thema begegnet nicht im Pentateuch, wie Choi zu Recht betont, wohl aber in Jub 12. Hier hätte Choi ein gutes Beispiel dafür gehabt, dass zur Zeit der Konzipierung des Penta- bzw. Hexateuchs Traditionen vorlagen, die nicht in denselben integriert wurden. Dass Ez 20 eine andere Vision von Israels Auszug aus Ägypten und der Wüstenzeit als der Pentateuch entwickelt, ist offenkundig. Allerdings lassen sich daraus auch andere Schlussfolgerungen als diejenigen von Choi ziehen. So fragt er sich, warum der Verfasser von Ez 20 „would ... not have included the wilderness rebellions that dominate the narrative material in Exodus–Numbers?“ (143). Dies könnte man auch damit erklären, dass die negativen Rebellionserzählungen, die hauptsächlich in Numeri begegnen, zur Zeit der Abfassung von Ez 20 noch gar nicht vorlagen, wenn es zutrifft, dass Numeri ein sehr spätes Buch ist, das nicht vor der Mitte der Perserzeit entstanden ist (leider zitiert Choi nicht die wichtige Arbeit von R. Achenbach, *Die Vollendung der Tora: Studien zur Redaktionsgeschichte des Numeribuches im Kontext von Hexateuch und Pentateuch* [BZAR 3; Wiesbaden 2003]). Dass Abraham in Ez 20 nicht erwähnt wird (vgl. auch seine Nichterwähnung in Ps 78, Ps 106 und 136) hängt damit zusammen, dass Patriarchen- und Exodustraditionen ursprünglich miteinander konkurrierende Ursprungsmythen waren, die erst spät miteinander kombiniert wurden (leider vermisst man auch diese Thematik in Chois Buch).

Die Widerlegung der *communis opinio*, nach welcher Neh 9 den Pentateuch voraussetzt, scheint mir nicht gelungen. So ignoriert Choi, dass die Erwähnung von Jahwes Erwählung Abrahams und Gerechtigkeit in Neh 9,7-8 sich am besten als Aufnahme von Gen 15 (insbesondere v. 6) erklären lassen. Das Fehlen des Dekalogs als Kriterium dafür zu verwenden, dass in Neh 9 und anderen Texten der Pentateuch nicht vorausgesetzt wird, erscheint mir als ein sehr willkürliches auf D. Aarons These beruhendes Argument zu sein, das weiterhin dadurch abgeschwächt wird, dass die beiden Dekaloge im Pentateuch wohl erst spät in ihre jeweiligen Kontexte eingefügt wurden. Die Behauptung, dass in Ex 32,4 Aaron der Sprecher der Identifizierung des Kalbes mit Jahwe sei (145), ist falsch und basiert vielleicht auf einer englischen Übersetzung. Im hebräischen Text spricht sowohl in Ex 32,4 als auch in Neh 9,18 das Volk.

Choi diskutiert dann außerbiblische Texte. Das Genesis Apocryphon ist m. E. kaum als ein Geschichtssummarium zu verstehen sondern als eine alternative Darstellung der Patriarchenerzählung. Hier hätte Choi mit Gewinn die Studie von B. Ziemer benützen können, welcher die These aufstellt, dass in Bezug auf Gen 14, 1QapGen eine ältere Vorlage enthält (B. Ziemer, *Abram - Abraham. Kompositionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zu Genesis 14, 15 und 17* [BZAW 350; Berlin - New York 2005]). Weiter behandelt Choi jüdische Historiker der hellenistischen Zeit wie Eupolemus und Artapan. Erstaunlicherweise findet Hekateus keine Erwähnung, obwohl Choi hier gute Argumente für seine These finden könnte. Hekateus kennt wohl mit dem Pentateuch konkurrierende Traditionen, welchen zufolge es Mose war, der die Israeliten in das Land führte (vgl. auch 1 Sam 12,6-8). Die Analyse des Jubiläenbuchs, des Buches der 12 Patriarchen und der Henoch-Tradition ergibt, dass diese Quellen "imaginative, creative innovations that stand at great odds with the Pentateuch" (181) enthalten. Im letzten Kapitel untersucht Choi die verschiedenen Verweise auf eine "Thora" außerhalb des Pentateuchs. Er kommt dabei zum Schluss, dass die meisten dieser Verweise keine Anspielungen auf bestimmte Texte des Pentateuchs beinhalten. Der Gebrauch von Thora in den Psalmen, Propheten, Qumran und anderen Texten "had little to do with any specific text at all" (221). Diese Behauptung mag teilweise stimmen. Ein Text wie 2 Kön 14,6 erklärt sich aber am einfachsten als ein freies Zitat von Deut 24,16. Dass hier keine wortwörtliche Übereinstimmung vorliegt, erklärt Choi selbst, wenn er (unter Aufnahme von S. Niditch und D. Carr) darauf hinweist, dass Oralität und Schriftlichkeit im alten Israel nicht scharf voneinander zu trennen sind (186-192). Chojs Annahme, dass Dtn 24,16, 2 Kön 14,6 und 2 Chr 25,4 "may well represent three independent treatments of a ban on intergenerational punishment" (198) ist eine unnötige Komplikation eines eindeutigen Befunds, nach welchem für den Autor des Königsbuches, der Deuteronomiumstext bereits eine schriftliche Autorität darstellte. Hierbei kann man sich streiten, ob in 2 Kön 14 "Torah" (zunächst) das Deuteronomium oder den gesamten Pentateuch meint.

In einem zusammenfassenden Kapitel resümiert Choi seine wichtigsten Ergebnisse. Danach folgen Bibliographie, sowie Indices der zitierten Texte (kurioserweise werden die biblischen Stellen in der Reihenfolge der englischen Übersetzungen zitiert) und Autoren.

Chojs Untersuchung ist lesenswert und zum Teil pertinent. Er hat sicher Recht darauf zu verweisen, dass der Pentateuch in der persischen und hellenistischen Zeit keine allein gültige und universelle Autorität besaß. Damit will Choi nun auch einen Beitrag zur aktuellen Pentateuchdiskussion leisten. Dazu ist jedoch kritisch anzumerken, dass er diese Diskussion nur sehr begrenzt diskutiert und beherrscht. Wichtige insbesondere deutschsprachige Veröffentlichungen der letzten zwanzig Jahre bleiben leider unerwähnt (die wenigen Verweise auf deutschsprachige Veröffentlichungen

enthalten eine Unmenge von Rechtschreibfehlern). Störend ist auch der häufige Verweis auf seinen Doktorvater. Die Formel "as David H. Aaron has pointed out" begegnet alle drei oder vier Seiten. Eine solche Beschwörung kann aber eine Argumentation nicht ersetzen und bisweilen bleibt Choi mit seinen Behauptungen auf einer sehr allgemeinen Ebene. Choi hat sich eine wichtige Fragestellung gewählt; seine Ergebnisse überzeugen jedoch nur teilweise.

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Garrett GALVIN, *Egypt as a Place of Refuge* (FAT 51). Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz Verlag, 2011. xv-230 p. 15,5 × 23. € 59.

The present book is a doctoral dissertation done at the Catholic University of America in 2009. Its stated aim is to look at Egypt as a place of refuge in the Old Testament (OT), recognizing that Egypt most often is presented there as a place of bondage from which Israel was delivered by Yahweh God. Texts singled out for special attention are 1 Kgs 11,14–12,24; Jeremiah 46; and Matt 2,13–15.19–21, although other biblical texts bearing on the refuge theme are cited and examined. Galvin's method is interdisciplinary, combining textual criticism, literary criticism, and historical criticism. He purports also to lift up the importance of genre in his work, but his use of the terms "genre" and "generic" are undefined, and murky at best. They appear to be alternatives to "historic" and "historical." Better to talk about rhetorical features or a *Tendenz* in the prose tradition, both of which are easier to recognize in the biblical text and are better argued. G does, however, discuss the OT vocabulary on "fleeing," "escaping," and the like, and distinguishes "refuge" from "permanent exile," "diaspora," and "criminal asylum," which is useful.

The study begins by looking at a select number of historical and literary (high-status) figures in the ancient Near East who sought refuge in Egypt, or away from Egypt, viz., Sinuhe, Idrimi of Alalkh, Urhi-Teshub, the Tale of Two Brothers, and minor figures such as two Philistine princes during the reign of Sargon II, Jamini of Ashdod, Chanunu of Gaza, and Jamani of Ashdod. Biblical figures include Hagar, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Jephthah, David, Absalom, Adonijah, and Jonah, with more detailed attention given to Hadad the Edomite (1 Kgs 11,14) and Jeroboam I (1 Kgs 11,26). Both of the latter flee to Egypt. After figures from the OT are examined, G looks at refuge seekers in the postexilic and Greco-Roman periods, where in the latter Mary and Joseph's sojourn in Egypt becomes the parade example (Matt 2,13–15.19–21). The net, then, is cast broadly, as so often happens in dissertations, covering a period from the Late Bronze Age to the Greco-Roman period.

The broad scope of the work brings with it problems, some of which result from a lack of focus, others resulting from an inability to properly assess the texts under discussion. Some figures flee to Egypt; others flee from Egypt; still others flee to places having no connection at all with Egypt. G builds here on Arnold van Gennep's *Les Rites de Passage* (Paris 1909), which posits three stages in some rites of passage: 1) separation; 2) liminality (marginalization); and 3) reincorporation. Some who flee and find liminality in a foreign place return to status and power (reincorporation); others do not. Chanunu of Gaza did indeed flee to Egypt during the reign of Tiglath-Pileser III (744-727 B.C.), but Sinuhe left Egypt to seek refuge in Syria. Idrimi was forced to flee Aleppo and went to dwell with the Hapiru in Canaan; Uri-Teshub was at first exiled to a region south of Aleppo, but then had to seek refuge in other places. Among the OT figures, Jacob takes flight not to Egypt, but to Paddan-aram. Joseph in going to Egypt is not seeking refuge; he is taken there against his will. Moses flees twice from Egypt, not to Egypt. Joseph and Moses are given extended treatment only because Egypt figures largely in their stories, not because they flee there. David flees when pursued by Saul and again when Absalom forces him to leave Jerusalem, but none of his flights is to Egypt. The latter is to Transjordan. Absalom fled too after murdering Ammon, but not to Egypt. Jeroboam I does flee to Egypt, staying there until Solomon dies, and then returns to take leadership over Israel's 10 northern tribes (1 Kgs 11,40; 12,1-20). This is the best example of van Gennep's scheme from the Primary History. The best example of refuge seeking in the book of Jeremiah is that of the (non-high-status) Uriah of Kiriath-jearim, a Yahweh prophet who flees to Egypt but is then quickly extradited by Jehoiakim and put to death in Jerusalem (Jer 26,20-23). And yes, refuge is a recurring theme in the Psalms, but it can be and is to any place thought to be safe — perhaps a high rock or nearby cave. There is clearly a problem in G's naming of his thesis topic, which unfortunately survives in the title of his book.

In critically assessing G's discussion of the biblical literature where Egypt, refuge, or persons seeking refuge are to be found, I will limit my remarks to Jeremiah. About G's main point here there can be no question: according to Jeremiah and the Book of Jeremiah Egypt is not the place to seek refuge. No place will be. Jeremiah views the judgment of Yahweh coming on the entire land and upon all nations (cf. Amos 9,1-4). Considerable space is given over in this section to discussing the differences between the MT and LXX in Jeremiah, but since they have no bearing on the topic at hand, as G himself concedes, they could well have been omitted or summarized in a sentence or two. Incidentally, while I agree with those who believe the LXX was translated from a shorter Hebrew text, I am not to be numbered among those who give priority to LXX Jeremiah (120 n. 15). My view is just the opposite, as G seems to realize later (122-123 n. 26).

Also, there is in my view no such thing as a "Baruch Narrative" in chaps. 36–45. Baruch's colophon in MT 45 ends a larger book of Jeremiah (in the LXX), but 36 in the present composition or any prior composition does not begin anything. It concludes a collection of earlier prose, as the colophonic nature of 36,1-8 makes clear. The last segment of prose in the Book of Jeremiah is chaps. 37–44, introduced by the stereotyped introduction in 37,1-2. Chapters 30–35 are also not a unit by any stretch. The unit here is 30–33. And chap. 26 does not begin a second Jeremiah scroll, etc. What the author should have done before building research on passages in Jeremiah was to undertake a more careful study on the composition of all of chaps. 24–44 in the Jeremiah book.

Here again I confess to being uneasy about G's repeated statements about tension existing between "history" and "genre" or "history" and "literary / rhetorical features." If and where this is the case, I should like it pointed out with more clarity than what the author has done. G is reacting against the historical concerns of 19th and early 20th century biblical scholars, but one is never sure just where the problem lies or how a synchronic analysis remedies the problem. One gets this, of course, in Robert Carroll, who weighs in heavily in G's analysis, but this anti-historical bias and alleged tension in the text, at least in my view, are all too often unclear, contrived, or both.

I am also not sure why such extended treatment of the oracles in chap. 46 was deemed necessary (which might also be said of the extended treatment of 1 Kgs 11,14–12,24), except to underscore the point that with Egypt being slated for judgment along with every other nation, it would not be a safe place to go. G devotes some 20 pages to discussing Jeremiah 46. Egypt does become a place of refuge in the postexilic period (2 Maccabees), but as G recognizes, with more Jews at this time living outside Israel than within the confines of the Holy Land.

Like many dissertations, the present work shows considerable industry, but the yield is small. And with the net being cast so broadly, discussions of text, chronology, composition, genre, literary features, and much else become too superficial, with the result that the book will ill serve readers of all descriptions who need more mature discussions. At the very least, material in this dissertation should have been tightened and much should have been edited out before publication. While this book contains material of interest to the OT specialist, it will have limited usefulness to a broader readership of clergy and lay readers.

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Jonathan Y. ROWE, *Michal's Moral Dilemma. A Literary, Anthropological and Ethical Interpretation* (Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 533). New York – London, T&T Clark, 2011. xiv-255 p. 16 × 23,5. £70.00

In 1 Sam 19,10-18a, David's wife Michal devises a ruse to enable David to escape from the servants of her father, Saul, who are pursuing him in order to kill him. Saul had failed to spear David, but Michal, realizing that the king would not let him escape, let him down through the window of his house and placed a teraphim in his bed, with a skein of goat's hair at its head. The messengers, not investigating further, were deceived by this into thinking David was still there and believing Michal's claim that he was ill. Saul sent the messengers back to bring him in his bed, and the ruse was discovered. Saul challenged Michal to explain herself for letting "his enemy" go, and she lied to him, claiming that David had threatened to kill her if she did not let him go.

Michal's "moral dilemma" was thus whether to collude with David and then lie to her own father, or to show loyalty to Saul and thereby bring about David's death. Either way, we may think, she would have been infringing a moral principle: in the one case the obligation to tell the truth, in the other the obligation to be protect one's spouse from murderous assault.

The case of Michal has been discussed as a problem within Christian moral theology, but Jonathan Rowe is concerned with it as an inner-biblical issue: "Whether ancient biblical, modern Western or some other morality should be normative is not the concern of the present book. My focus will be upon moral conflict within the Old Testament and the text's own assessment of its resolution" (3). This sounds as though the approach will be a literary one. But in fact (and despite the book's subtitle) the major emphasis falls on ethics and anthropology. In both cases Rowe provides not only an exhaustive discussion of these disciplines as they bear on the case of Michal, but also a very useful guide to their impact on Old Testament studies more generally. He is a well-informed and reliable guide. It is a long time before we get round to Michal, but the preceding theoretical discussion is extremely valuable.

Rowe sets out various options for understanding ethics in the Old Testament, drawing on the burgeoning interest in this topic over the last thirty years or so. In chapter 2 he brings it into contact with the Western philosophical tradition — a task rarely attempted before (though see Jaco Gericke, *The Hebrew Bible and Philosophy of Religion*, forthcoming from SBL) — and shows that discussion of moral goods, not just of moral imperatives, makes sense when reading the Hebrew Bible, much as it does in the case of classical antiquity. Old Testament "laws" (as argued, for example, by Bernard Jackson) are often indications of where the good lies, rather than "justiciable" regulations. The assumption that ancient Israel thought in terms of the right rather than the good—of divine decrees

rather than wise axioms — may have to be given up. Goods, however, can conflict, and that is what seems to be happening for Michal, who is caught between two goods: support for her father and support for her husband.

The good in Israel, Rowe argues, was indeed primarily defined in terms of kinship: the family was its natural locus. This clearly requires a discussion informed by social anthropology, which chapter 3 provides. This is perhaps the book's strongest point, subtle and careful in probing how anthropological work can illuminate the Old Testament. Rowe favours "practice theory", a comparatively recent addition to the anthropological tool-box, which sees kinship relations, for example, as "enacted" in the way people relate to family members and, indeed, in who it is that they reckon to be "kin". Practice theorists think of kinship relationships as socially constructed, much as many gender theorists and some feminists think of gender as a social construct rather than as a biological given. (Pierre Bourdieu is an important player here.)

This approach turns out to reinforce the conclusions of chapter 2 on the centrality of "moral goods". Three points are made. "First, the context for practice includes *the existence of multiple, contradicting and potentially mutually exclusive morals goods*" (97). Secondly, we need to allow for "*the variety of perception of any particular situation or action in which moral goods are in play*" (97). And thirdly, there is "*the necessarily personal, and thus open, nature of practice, which nevertheless can exhibit regularity*" (98; all italics in original). Michal's "practice" is understood (chapter 4) by reference to Bakhtin's ideas of "polyphony" in texts, the presence of many (mutually inconsistent) "voices". The text of 1 Samuel does not necessarily offer a definitive view of who is in the right, but allows the reader some choices over this. However, as already argued in chapter 2, Rowe does not see Old Testament narrative as wholly multivalent: he is sceptical of attempts, such as this reviewer's, to enlist Martha Nussbaum's approach for the discussion of Old Testament ethics. On the whole, he thinks, we can see the moral direction Old Testament texts are trying to point us in: generally one "voice" emerges as approved by the implied author. This is a helpful corrective to too great an emphasis on the polyvalency of the text, even though that emphasis was itself a corrective to a popular idea of biblical ethics as extremely authoritarian, and as expressing only one voice — the voice of God.

Chapter 5 turns, finally, to the actual story of Michal, in the light of all the theoretical discussion. The "voices" of Michal and Saul respectively are analysed. The important point is made that "our" assumption that Michal's primary obligation will have been to her husband David, and that consequently Saul is unreasonable to expect her to tell him the truth about David's escape, is probably a mistake. In societies of the kind described here, daughters remain loyal to their fathers for many years: it would, after all, be to their father's house that they would most probably

return in case of divorce, and it is a long time before they are integrated into their new family. ("Ruth was a rare case of a woman cleaving to her husband's family rather than to her own", 149). So it is Michal's support for David against her father, and her consequent willingness to deceive the latter, that is the surprising element in the story. Readers have been misled here by the way the narrative as a whole in 1 Samuel seems to favour David over Saul. Equally, David is Saul's rival and even "enemy": how would we not expect Saul to try to eliminate him? Exegetes often assume, says Rowe, that "Saul's action is an aberration: he has become a "brazen murderer" or a "mad king". They assume that the "correct" moral behaviour is that sanctioned by the modern state, with its emphasis upon due process and "impartiality". I propose, however, that this supposition is unlikely and that Saul's action can be explained as culturally expected — not for everyone but certainly for a powerful leader" (140).

Thus our "modern" Western assumptions are challenged by the story of Michal. Her blatant lies to Saul have been a stumbling-block for many Christian readers, but Rowe, in a useful discussion of truth-telling in the Old Testament, shows how the conception of what telling the truth means can vary between societies and can be presented differently in different kinds of narrative. In Israel, as in many societies, the appropriateness of telling the unvarnished truth was regarded as dependent on occasion and context. As Rowe observes, complete truthfulness (even supposing we knew what that would really mean) would wreck many relationships, and lay human society waste. The Old Testament, though in some contexts it insists on "the whole truth" (in court, for example), is quite realistic about the extent to which it is appropriate to be completely candid, and very un-Kantian. Perhaps then, the thought occurs to me, Michal did not agonize very much over her "moral dilemma" at all; perhaps even to see it as such is anachronistic, or culturally inappropriate.

This thought would rather undermine the need for the present book! But that is a slightly mischievous suggestion, and I do not mean it too seriously. Rowe's work is, at the very least, a useful contribution to understanding 1 Samuel. But, even more, it is an erudite introduction to a number of fruitful areas in modern Old Testament scholarship, which benefits from being focused on one short passage. It is an admirably up-to-date account of the work being done in ethics, social anthropology, and literary theory, as these bear on the study of the Hebrew Bible. It thus has a much wider relevance than the title might suggest. I hope we can look forward to further studies by Jonathan Y. Rowe in some or all of these areas.

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Novum Testamentum

Thomas Johan BAUER, *Paulus und die kaiserzeitliche Epistolographie. Kontextualisierung und Analyse der Briefe an Philemon und an die Galater* (WUNT 276; Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck 2011) 482p.

Fruit d'une thèse défendue en 2011 à Fribourg en Brisgau et publiée la même année dans la prestigieuse collection Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament — dans la première série, celle des professeurs —, la monographie de T.J. Bauer a en outre reçu le prix Bernhard Welte; c'est dire les qualités qui lui ont été reconnues.

Elle peut être décrite comme un minutieux travail d'analyse comparée portant sur l'épistolographie à l'époque impériale (romaine), pour ensuite, en fonction des résultats, voir comment situer les lettres de l'apôtre Paul. L'auteur n'a pas seulement porté ses recherches sur les lettres reconnues comme littéraires, il les a toutes prises en considération, quels que soient (1) leurs auteurs: authentiques ou pseudépigraphes, collectifs ou individuels, (2) leurs destinataires, (3) leur origine géographique: Grèce, Italie, Égypte et Asie, (3) leur objet et leur fonction (4), leur statut: officielles et/ou privées, (5) leur vocabulaire, leur style et leur composition.

Dans le ch. 1 (1-11) Bauer (désormais B.) montre qu'il faut dépasser la problématique de Norden (qui comparait les lettres de Paul seulement avec celles considérées comme littéraires) et celle de Deissmann, à qui l'on doit la distinction entre épître et lettre, mais qui n'a pu étendre son enquête à toutes les lettres découvertes et publiées depuis. Il justifie aussi le choix de Philémon et Galates, reconnues par tous comme authentiques: l'une brève et l'autre plus longue, l'une proche du genre billet et l'autre du genre épître, l'une à un individu et l'autre à une collectivité — ces différences permettant d'avoir en ces deux écrits des échantillons représentatifs de la correspondance paulinienne.

Le ch. 2 (12-90), consacré aux lettres de l'époque impériale, s'efforce de classer les données, relevées ici sans entrer dans les détails. (1) Les lettres grecques et romaines, qu'il répartit en trois groupes: celles des personnalités (hommes d'état, orateurs, philosophes, etc.), celles dites fictives (qu'on trouve dans les romans, etc.), et les lettres occasionnelles. Même pour les lettres où les fautes de grammaire et de style sont nombreuses, le cadre formel est ferme. L'existence de manuels et les listes de sujets traités (cf. les τύποι ἐπιστολικοί du Pseudo-Démétrius) témoignent de la théorisation déjà opérée. La lettre ancienne, grecque ou romaine, est composée de trois parties: un *praescriptum* (destinateur, destinataire et salut), un corps (comprenant une ouverture, un centre et une fin) et un *postscriptum* (salut final bref). (2) Les lettres du judaïsme ancien. Après les avoir énumérées (un peu moins de 200, en diverses langues), il signale que la

composition tripartite est reprise originalement (un *praescriptum* et un *postscriptum* plus ou moins longs, avec des formules propres, comme *shalom*, etc.). (3) Les premières lettres chrétiennes. Le relevé en est fait jusqu'à la moitié du II^{ème} siècle et en sont indiqués les éléments, comme la mention d'action de grâces initiale des lettres pauliniennes, dont on se demande encore si elle est parallèle au *proskynèma* du *Briefformular* grec d'alors. Sur ces questions, Bauer cite plusieurs fois F. Schnider – W. Stenger, *Studien zum neutestamentlichen Briefformular* (NTTS 11; Leiden 1987), pour qui la mention d'action de grâces et l'auto-présentation (ou l'auto-recommandation) de Paul ne font pas partie du corps, alors que B. les y insère avec raison.

La présentation des données est suivie d'une série de réflexions méthodologiques préparant l'analyse des premières lettres chrétiennes (ch. 3, 91-109). Si ces dernières sont stylistiquement plus proches des *Papyrusbriefen*, celles de Paul sont cependant moins occasionnelles, dans la mesure où l'apôtre cherche toujours à élargir et universaliser ses idées, ce qu'ailleurs j'ai appelé la "prise de distance" ("La rhétorique paulinienne: construction et communication d'une pensée", A. Dettwiler – J.D. Kaestli – D. Marguerat [eds.], *Paul, une théologie en construction* [Genève 2004] 47-66, en particulier 52-55). Quant à leur forme, les premières lettres chrétiennes obéissent aux règles de l'épistolographie grecque. Cela dit, la formation rhétorique de Paul reste discutée, et si elle fut réelle, elle ne se déroula pas dans un des grands centres alors renommés (100-101). Et pour l'analyse des lettres de Paul, surtout celles qui sont plus longues, la rhétorique ancienne se révèle utile (104), à condition de l'utiliser avec intelligence et flexibilité.

Les deux chapitres suivants analysent Phm (ch. 4, 110-166) et Gal (ch. 5, 167-387) à l'aide de l'épistolographie et de la rhétorique anciennes. Pour Phm, l'état de la recherche est en gros le suivant: le lieu de détention de Paul reste discuté: Éphèse pour les uns, Rome voire Césarée pour les autres. L'intention de Paul donne, elle aussi, lieu à des interprétations divergentes qu'on rappellera ici très brièvement: l'opinion la plus courante est qu'Onésimus ayant volé son maître Philémon et ayant fui (il aurait volé pour fuir, ou fui parce qu'ayant volé) à Éphèse ou Rome pour y trouver asile, aurait rencontré Paul, qui l'aurait converti et le renverrait à son maître, avec la lettre qui est maintenant dans le NT, pour qu'il le reprenne sans le punir. D'autres pensent qu'Onésime aurait fui auprès de Paul, ami de Philémon, pour qu'il intercède en sa faveur, certifie qu'il n'est pas/plus fugitif et obtienne sa réintégration. Phm est en effet comparable à la lettre de Pline le Jeune à Sabrinus (*epist.* 9.21sq), semble y décrire la même situation et avoir la même fonction, point de vue que, si je ne me trompe, B. partage. D'autres encore pensent qu'Onésime, esclave non chrétien, n'aurait pas fui mais aurait été envoyé pour aider Paul ou lui faire parvenir un cadeau; il aurait été converti par Paul, et ce dernier demanderait à Philémon

de le reprendre non comme esclave mais comme homme libre. Pour d'autres enfin, qui interprètent le v. 20a non métaphoriquement, Onésime ne serait pas l'esclave de Philémon, mais son frère, et Paul demanderait qu'il ait aux yeux de Philémon un statut correspondant à cet état. Seule une analyse à nouveaux frais de Phm pourra se prononcer plus sûrement.

Phm suit la composition des lettres de l'époque, avec un *praescriptum* (vv. 1-3); un corps (vv. 4-24), comprenant une mention d'action de grâces (vv. 4-7), un centre (vv. 8-20) et une finale, dont deux éléments sont typiques, l'annonce de visite et les notifications de salutations (vv. 21-24); enfin un *postscriptum* (v. 25). Quant au type, Phm s'apparente aux lettres de recommandation (136). Pour chacune de ces parties, B. présente les éléments épistolaires qu'on retrouve dans les autres lettres de Paul et surtout dans le modèle gréco-romain. Quant à l'influence de la rhétorique ancienne sur Phm, elle est repérable dans l'importance donnée à l'*ethos* de Philémon, d'Onésime et de Paul lui-même, mais aussi dans l'usage des figures, en particulier la synonymie et l'étymologie (*onèsimos* [de *oninèmi*, voir v. 20] = utile, profitable = *euchrèstos* v. 11). Quant à l'argumentation, elle repose sur un enthymème (157-158): par leur baptême, Onésime et Philémon sont devenus fils de Paul, ils doivent donc vivre en frères.

B. rappelle que pour interpréter correctement Phm, il faut se rappeler que la structure de communication est double: Paul écrit à Philémon sur Onésime, et aussi à la communauté locale sur Onésime et Philémon. Voilà pourquoi une quelconque menace de la part de Paul est à exclure, car la communauté reçoit en réalité une lettre-éloge de Philémon (163). Que Paul ait rédigé la lettre ou ait laissé à l'un de ses collaborateurs (Timothée v. 1) le soin de la peaufiner, il faut admettre que son auteur a une formation scolaire assez élevée (166).

Le chapitre le plus étoffé a évidemment pour objet Gal, une des lettres les plus étudiées de Paul. Après avoir présenté l'état complexe de la recherche, B. passe aux analyses. Comme Phm, Gal suit les conventions de l'époque, en particulier pour sa composition, avec un *praescriptum* (1,1-5); un corps (1,6-6,10), divisé lui-même en trois: une ouverture (1,6-9) une partie centrale (1,10-6,10) comprenant elle-même une section autobiographique (1,10-2,21) une section doctrinale (3,1-5,12) et une section parénétique (5,13-6,10), le reste de la lettre constituant le cadre épistolaire final (6,11-18). La seule différence est l'absence de mention d'action de grâces qui, dans les lettres d'alors, correspond à une formule de politesse ("Sache que je fais toujours mémoire de toi", "Sache que je ne t'oublie pas" et les déclarations du genre). Rien là qui ne soit déjà connu; l'intérêt de cette monographie vient plutôt de cet aller et retour continu de Gal aux différents types de lettres de l'époque, pour montrer ce qu'il y a de commun mais aussi de propre à Paul (par ex. Gal, de loin plus longue que la plupart des lettres). La question du type de lettre qu'est Gal est d'autant plus délicate que, selon l'approche, épistolaire ou rhétorique, les réponses

ne sont pas basées sur les mêmes critères. On sait que les rhétoriciens sont fondamentalement divisés: pour certains, Gal appartient au genre judiciaire (Paul y ferait l'apologie de son ministère et de son Évangile), pour d'autres au genre délibératif (est-il ou non profitable aux ethnico-chrétiens de se faire circoncrire?) et pour d'autres enfin au genre épideictique (aux Galates Paul se voit obligé de rappeler les valeurs et les enjeux de l'Évangile). Qu'est-ce que l'approche épistolaire peut dire du type de cette lettre? En désaccord avec D. Kremendahl, *Die Botschaft der Form. Zur Verhältnis von antiker Epistolographie und Rhetorik in Galaterbrief* (NTOA 46; Freiburg 2000), selon qui Gal appartient au *typos apologètikos*, B. montre que Gal ne peut être une apologie. Il pense également que les éléments manquent pour qu'on y voie un *typos katègorikos* (lettre de blâme/accusation, 288). Gal a bien plus de traits communs avec le *Lehrbrief* (lettre didactique) de type philosophique (305, 313). Résultat qui rejoint en quelque sorte celui des exégètes pour qui le genre rhétorique de Gal est *épideictique*. B. s'interroge ensuite sur la *dispositio* rhétorique: peut-on considérer Gal 1,12–2,14 comme une *narratio*? B. fait très justement noter qu'en ce temps-là la *narratio* ne se trouvait que dans les discours judiciaires. Mais, en la matière, il est difficile voire impossible de se prononcer si l'on ne voit que Gal 1,13–2,21 enchaîne les raisons visant à prouver la *propositio* de Gal 1,11–12 et n'est pas une *narratio* au sens strict du terme. Je me suis déjà expliqué sur le développement de ce passage dans un article auquel je me permets de renvoyer: "Galates 1–2. Quelle fonction et quelle démonstration?", *Bib* 86 (2005) 305–323. Si Gal 1,11–12 n'est pas la *propositio* de toute la lettre, il l'est certainement des deux premiers chapitres. On peut à cet égard regretter que ceux qui refusent à Gal de suivre les modèles de *dispositio* des discours anciens réfléchissent de façon holistique, sans voir que toutes les lettres de Paul ne comprennent pas qu'une seule argumentation, mais plusieurs (pour Gal, par ex., 1,11–2,21; 3,1–4,7; etc.) ayant chacune leur *dispositio*.

On peut remercier B. d'avoir, sans polémique mais avec rigueur et finesse, montré qu'il fallait (ré)examiner avec une extrême minutie les données pauliniennes en les comparant exhaustivement avec les lettres et argumentations de ce temps-là. Disons en conclusion que l'échantillon choisi par B. (Phm et Gal) est bien représentatif de la manière d'écrire de Paul et laisse peu de doutes sur la connaissance qu'il a des modèles épistolaires et rhétoriques de son temps.

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Scot McKNIGHT, *The Letter of James* (NICNT). Grand Rapids, Michigan – Cambridge, U. K., William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2011. xxx-497 p. 16 × 24. \$55.00 – £35.99

La prestigiosa collana *New International Commentary on the New Testament* dell'editrice Eerdmans, che già aveva un commentario alla lettera di Giacomo del 1976 ad opera di J. Adamson, 35 anni dopo ne accoglie un altro composto da S. McKnight, docente alla North Park University di Chicago, IL, della Evangelical Covenant Church. Quest'ultimo si aggiunge ad una felice schiera di commentari e studi di questi ultimi decenni sulla prima delle epistole cattoliche, che, a partire da quello del Dibelius (¹1921; ¹²1984), cercano di accostarsi a Gc con quella "simpatia" che consenta di recepirne appieno il messaggio. Sembra ormai dunque superata anche in campo protestante la ben nota censura formulata e poi ribadita vita natural durante da Martin Lutero.

Secondo l'uso tradizionale McKnight premette un'introduzione di 55 pagine, più contenuta perciò di quella che si trova in altri commentari biblici (ad esempio quello di H. Frankemölle, *Der Brief des Jakobus* [Gütersloh 1994], pur essendo un *Taschenbuch-Kommentar*, ne ha 120 circa). Il motivo di tale brevità si trova nel fatto che l'autore non affronta tutte le numerose questioni introduttive alla lettera che di solito si trovano negli altri commentari, ma solo alcune. Si tratta precisamente della questione dell'identità del Giacomo che si presenta in Gc 1,1, del reperimento dei principali temi della lettera e della *vexata quaestio* della sua struttura. Personalmente avremmo gradito almeno una breve storia della canonicità di Gc e un'analisi della qualità del greco sulla base di esempi (tematica questa molto connessa a quella dell'identificazione dell'autore di Gc). Su quest'ultima materia si danno tuttavia diverse considerazioni nel corso del commento.

Nel seguito McKnight affronta l'esegesi del testo di Giacomo in modo estremamente analitico e con abbondante ricorso a note per informazioni di complemento di vario tipo. La costante tecnica espositiva consiste nel dare, per ogni sezione, una traduzione inglese del testo, seguita da una presentazione generale dei contenuti e delle maggiori problematiche: egli procede quindi dal generale al particolare, non sfuggendo qua e là a ripetizioni. Nel *Preface* McKnight dichiara di voler scrivere per "pastors, preachers, and teachers" (xi; lo stesso 266; 314). Effettivamente molte caratteristiche di questo testo sono coerenti con tale scelta di fondo: ad esempio lo stile chiaro e disteso, il fatto di riservare le parole in caratteri greci alle note, la frequente discussione delle varie traduzioni inglesi usuali (cf. ad esempio 336; 371-372; 442 n. 85) e l'uso praticamente esclusivo della letteratura anglosassone. In tutto il volume si trovano solo due *excursus* (il primo sui macarismi e il secondo sul rapporto tra Giacomo e Paolo). Alla fine si annettono ben 35 pagine con quattro tipi di

indici, rispettivamente degli autori, delle materie, scritturistico e della letteratura antica extrabiblica, i quali uniti alle abbondantissime indicazioni bibliografiche all'inizio e nelle note rendono il testo di McKnight una sorta di enciclopedia giacobitica.

Venendo alle posizioni fondamentali dell'autore, troviamo nella parte introduttiva e poi in tutto il commento dettagliato la convinzione che l'autore della lettera sia il cosiddetto "fratello del Signore". Non c'è dubbio che questa sia l'opinione più diffusa e forse la più probabile; il McKnight la sostiene a spada tratta e si dà molto da fare per confutare le ipotesi alternative. A nostro parere le obiezioni classiche non sono così irrilevanti come egli sostiene: ad esempio se fosse vero, come l'autore dichiara, che il Giacomo chiamato anche "fratello del Signore" fu "the first Pope" (12, già presente nel testo di Adamson, 52), come spiegare la notevole difficoltà che un suo scritto ebbe ad essere accettato come canonico? Anche ammettendo che si tratti di un parente o addirittura fratestastro di Gesù, autorizza ciò a parlare di un "falegname" cresciuto vicino al lago di Galilea (cf. 28ss)? Nella sostanza le argomentazioni contrarie all'identificazione tra il "fratello del Signore" e l'autore di Gc, formulate ad esempio dal Frankemölle nel suo commentario (cf. specialmente 45-54) appaiono almeno altrettanto degne di considerazione di quelle del McKnight. L'unica obiezione, che non è facile da eliminare, agli argomenti del Frankemölle è che egli costruisce la personalità teologica del Giacomo fratello del Signore (a suo parere decisamente diversa da quella della lettera di Gc) sulla base dei racconti di Gal 2 e di At 15, che potrebbero essere "deformati" dalle rispettive teologie dei loro due autori. L'assunto del McKnight in merito all'autore di Gc lo porta inevitabilmente a datare lo scritto negli anni '50 (cf. 38).

Un'altra convinzione granitica del presente commentario concerne gli *Adressaten* della lettera, che McKnight definisce "messianic community", una formula che è presente fino a cinque volte nella stessa pagina e quindi ricorre più di duecento volte nel corso del testo, con discutibile monotonia. Con tale formula egli intende un vasto numero di comunità formate da giudei credenti nella messianità di Gesù e dispersi nell'impero romano, senza possibilità di ulteriore dimostrabile localizzazione (cf. 38). Nel corso dell'esegesi dettagliata l'autore non manca di sottolineare le conferme di questa sua assunzione basilare. Anche questa convinzione comunque convive nel panorama esegetico con diverse altre, ugualmente probabili; forse sarebbe più prudente ammettere che non siamo in grado di determinare con sicurezza a quale classe di persone il Giacomo, reale o pseudonimo, intende rivolgersi.

Nell'esegesi concreta delle singole frasi di Gc McKnight fa intervenire spesso ed efficacemente l'analisi grammaticale e lessicale, mentre fa un uso molto moderato della retorica e della *Formgeschichte*. Una caratteristica del suo modo di procedere che si impone positivamente si può

esprime con la formula “spiegare Giacomo con Giacomo”, che è senz’altro da condividere. Va da sé che questo metodo esige una perfetta conoscenza e profonda assimilazione del testo di Gc, che comunque l’autore in tutto il commentario dimostra di possedere, senz’altro quale frutto di una frequentazione dell’intera carriera accademica, come egli stesso dichiara (cf. 235, n. 41). Una seconda caratteristica positiva consiste nell’esplicitare puntigliosamente le numerose coincidenze contenutistiche tra le espressioni della lettera e le parole di Gesù nei vangeli, soprattutto in quello di Matteo. Il nostro autore mette ben in risalto il fatto che quasi sempre le consonanze non consistono nella ripetizione delle stesse parole di Gesù, ma nella coincidenza delle idee, circostanza che costringe a porsi la domanda sulle conseguenze che ciò ha sul rapporto di Gc con la tradizione gesuanica e quindi sulla datazione di Gc. Tra l’altro, queste sottolineature di McKnight dimostrano quanto fosse lontana dalla realtà la vecchia *querelle*, ripetuta praticamente in tutti i commentari, sul “grado di cristianità” di Gc, problematica anch’essa di origine luterana. Abbiamo trovato molto opportuna anche la sottolineatura, pur meno frequente della precedente, delle importanti congruenze con l’etica paolina. Il fatto che l’esegeta americano liquidi piuttosto sbrigativamente la consueta accusa di disordine compositivo della lettera così come quella della sua struttura o dell’assenza di una formula di congedo alla fine, appare del tutto condivisibile.

Data la cura che McKnight mette nel trattare ogni singolo particolare di Gc è ovvio che ci siano nel suo ampio testo molti punti che sarebbero meritevoli di sottolineatura e di discussione. L’attenzione del lettore non può tuttavia evitare di concentrarsi sull’analisi dei due passi più noti e che, nel corso della storia della Chiesa, hanno avuto una risonanza teologica che dura praticamente fino ad oggi. Si tratta innanzitutto della sezione 2,14-26, nella quale si definisce il rapporto tra fede e opere da una parte e la giustificazione e la salvezza dall’altra, tema al quale l’autore (che nel corso del volume più di una volta si dichiara protestante: cf. 12; 228 ecc.) dedica quasi 40 pagine.

Mentre Paolo parla esplicitamente e spesso di “opere della Legge” (cf. Gal 2,16; 3,2.5.10; Rom 2,15; 3,20.27.28 ecc.), Giacomo non lo fa mai, ma McKnight, distanziandosi dall’*opinio communis*, sostiene che con i termini ἔργον/ἔργα il secondo, che per lo studioso americano, come abbiamo già detto, scrive a “giudei messianici”, intende le opere comandate dalla Torà seppur filtrate dall’interpretazione di Gesù, cioè riassunte nel duplice comandamento dell’amore. Con il termine “fede” poi Gc, secondo McKnight, intende “confessional faith in God as one and Jesus as the Messiah” (229). Infine con “salvare/salvezza”, termini che esprimono la terza entità coinvolta nella *querelle* Paolo/Giacomo, Gc intenderebbe “regenerative, morally transforming, and eternal... salvation” (229), cioè una qualità dell’uomo che lo salva al cospetto del giudizio finale di Dio. Orbene, una fede così concepita, senza opere di misericordia e suppo-

nendo che ciò sia realmente possibile, per Gc non può salvare l'uomo nel giudizio finale. L'autore cerca in un breve *excursus* di fare il punto sulla *vexata quaestio* del rapporto tra Paolo e Giacomo in merito ai tre concetti coinvolti. Egli elenca i non pochi tentativi di descrivere la situazione, proposti soprattutto dopo la riforma protestante. Impossibile tentare qui di riassumere in poche parole il suo pensiero. È chiaro che egli, come ormai praticamente tutti gli esegeti, esclude la presenza di una semplice contraddizione tra le due teologie, paolina e giacobea, ma, a nostro parere giustamente, non se la sente di liquidare l'argomento come se non ci fossero effettivamente delle tensioni tra di esse. McKnight si muove nell'ambito di categorie quasi esclusivamente esegetiche e in questo caso esse si rivelano insufficienti, anche perché alla fin fine deve ammettere che noi conosciamo troppo poco delle relazioni personali tra tali due "colonne" della Chiesa primitiva. In ogni caso è innegabile che essi hanno sensibilità decisamente differenti in merito al rapporto tra fede e opere e forse differenti problemi da risolvere, anche se opportunamente nel testo si sottolineano notevoli convergenze tra Paolo e Gc soprattutto in passi diversi da Gal 2 e Rom 3, e infine si concede che gran parte delle idee di Gc è più vicina a quelle del Gesù evangelico di quanto non lo siano quelle di Paolo. Si deve infine rilevare che molte affermazioni di McKnight sono conseguenza delle sue convinzioni preve che il Giacomo di cui qui si parla sia il cosiddetto fratello del Signore e che egli si rivolga a dei "giudei messianici".

Il secondo passo che attira inevitabilmente l'attenzione è quello relativo all'unzione degli infermi (5,14-15). Data la grande rilevanza che la Chiesa annette alla cura dei malati e dei moribondi si ha l'impressione che l'autore non applichi a tale passo la stessa acribia usata altrove. Stupiscono soprattutto i suoi dubbi sul fatto che qui il termine *πρεσβύτερος* possa riferirsi non già ad un ministero ecclesiale, per quanto ancora non ben definito (come nel resto del NT), ma semplicemente all'età anagrafica.

Come dovrebbe già risultare dalle osservazioni che precedono quest'opera del McKnight si presenta come un ottimo strumento di lavoro per chi desideri capire e meditare la lettera di Giacomo. L'ampiezza della trattazione e l'accuratezza dei rimandi consentirà di approfondire le problematiche che ancora abbisognano di studio e di chiarimento. Lo consigliamo perciò volentieri a quelle classi di lettori (pastori, predicatori e insegnanti) per cui l'autore lo ha scritto.

Varia

- A. FRENDO, *Pre-Exilic Israel, the Hebrew Bible, and Archaeology. Integrating Text and Artefact* (Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 549). New York – London, T&T Clark, 2011. xii-120 p. 16 × 24. £65.00.

La storia del rapporto tra testo Bibbia e archeologia è insieme antica e attuale, come dimostra non solo la recente *querelle* sul ritrovamento del “palazzo di David” a Gerusalemme (E. Mazar, *Preliminary Report on the City of David Excavations 2005 at the Visitor Center Area* [Jerusalem 2007]; *contra* I. Filkenstein – Z. Herzog – L. Singer-Avitz – D. Ussishkin, “Has King David’s Palace in Jerusalem been found?”, *Tel Aviv* 34 [2007] 142-164) ma anche il dibattito sul periodo neobabilonese (C. Carter, “Ideology and Archaeology in the Neo-Babylonian Period: Excavating Text and Tell”, *Judah and the Judeans in the Neo-Babylonian Period* [eds. O. Lipschits – J. Blenkinsopp] [Winona Lake 2003] 301-322) e su quello persiano (I. Filkenstein, “Persian Period Jerusalem and Yehud: a Rejoinder”, *The Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 9 [2009] art. 24 e Z. Zevit, “Is there an Archaeological Case for Phantom Settlements in Persian Period?”, *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 141 [2009] 124-137 con riferimento all’uso dell’*argumentum e silentio*).

Cimentarsi con un argomento come quello del rapporto tra testi e archeologia, in particolare con la questione dell’“archeologia biblica” e farlo in un lavoro agile, di facile consultazione e al contempo di contenuti corretti è, pertanto, impresa davvero difficile. A. Frendo si è proposto di farlo in questo lavoro da lui definito una “elementary grammar on methodology of how one could go about relating, without confusing, written and non-written evidence” (1) senza servirsi di regole generali di correlazione ma utilizzando il principio di non contraddizione nell’analisi di singoli casi.

Nel capitolo 2, “Two sides of the Same Coin: Archaeology as a Specialized Form of History”, l’archeologia e la storia sono definite e poste a confronto. Dopo un cenno alle questioni della casualità e frammentarietà del dato archeologico e del rapporto tra cultura materiale ed etnicità, l’archeologia è definita “methodological retrieval and analysis of humanity’s past material in order to reconstruct our human story” (10). Essa è espressione di classi sociali differenziate e “anonima”. La storia, intesa come insieme delle fonti scritte, è ritenuta anch’essa “random and fragmentary” (14), espressione del punto di vista della classe dirigente e dell’ideologia dell’autore o di chi ha commissionato il testo mentre la storiografia è definita come un “creating the past but not ‘inventing’ it” (M.Z. Brettler, *The Creation of History in Ancient Israel* [London 1995] 218, n. 5).

Partendo dalla considerazione che il testo biblico è formato da molti generi (mito, saga, leggenda e testi storici), l’Autore si chiede “in what sense is the Old Testament historical?” (19). La risposta è che, pur non essendo un libro storico, i testi che compongono l’Antico Testamento hanno “some contact with history”

anche se “tangential and partial rather than systematic and complete” (J. Barr, “Story and History in Biblical Theology”, *Journal of Religion* 56 [1976] 1-17).

Nel capitolo 3, “An Indissolubility in diversity”, l'autore considera archeologia e analisi dei testi alla stregua di una unione ipostatica, come i lati di una stessa medaglia. Le due discipline infatti, laddove compresenti in uno stesso arco cronologico, andrebbero utilizzate in una prospettiva olistica. Pur nella diversità delle leggi proprie di tali discipline e delle diverse localizzazioni che ne conseguono (eventi a breve termine per i testi e processi a lungo termine per l'archeologia), lo storico dovrebbe accordare maggiore affinità alle due discipline riconoscendo alla base di entrambe l'uso dell'analogia. L'Autore lamenta – ma non spiega come superarla – l'iperspecializzazione delle due discipline che non porta ad un vero dialogo ma, spesso, ad una semplice giustapposizione di dati. Egli stesso, tuttavia, imputa soprattutto all'archeologia la fragilità dell'*argumentum e silentio* e palesa un bisogno “to go back to the text” (33-34). Tale preferenza è ratificata dall'esempio sulle origini dell'antico Israele in cui, stando agli autori da lui citati (A. Lemaire e B.S.J. Isserling), lo studio dei testi e dell'onomastica in essi contenuta, meglio dell'archeologia, aiuterebbe a ricostruire l'emergere dell'antico Israele al contempo nel suo contesto cananeo e nel suo retaggio egiziano.

Nel capitolo 4, “Some Historiographic Insights: Mainly Classical”, l'Autore tratta di come nell'antichità fosse affrontata la questione del rapporto fra testi e testimonianze archeologiche. La scelta di esaminare gli autori classici (Erodoto, Tuciddide, Quintiliano, Cicerone, Polibio e Seneca, Platone ed Aristotele) è dovuta al fatto che, rispetto agli Ebrei antichi e alle popolazioni vicino orientali, gli storiografi del mondo classico rifletterono più esplicitamente su che cosa comportasse scrivere la storia e questa riflessione include anche il rapporto tra testi e testimonianze archeologiche. Con gli storici dell'antico Israele si hanno i primi “clear-cut instances of historical narratives in the ancient Near East” e di una storiografia intesa come “writing about the past” (40) che permette alla storia di parlare attraverso l'interpretazione e la “ricostruzione narrativa”. L'attività storiografica fu quindi coscientemente praticata dagli Israeliti nonostante il processo di elaborazione del testo biblico preveda che le tradizioni storiche siano mescolate con elementi di fantasia. La differenza tra storiografia israelitica e quella degli autori classici è che questi ultimi riflettono esplicitamente sullo “scrivere la storia” e che alcune di queste riflessioni tengono anche conto del rapporto tra testi e archeologia (in particolare Erodoto e Tuciddide).

Nel capitolo 5 “To Know or Not to Know”, l'Autore affronta questioni di tipo epistemologico che forniscono le basi filosofiche per affrontare il problema del primo Israele antico. Nella prima parte del capitolo viene sottoposta a serrata critica l'idea dei post-modernisti che non si possa conoscere la verità storica, essendo essa una semplice costruzione degli storici. I post-modernisti sostengono che è impossibile distinguere tra interpretazioni vere e false e che nessun testo può essere alla base della ricostruzione storica in

quanto esprimono una realtà interpretata e non reale. Contrario a questa affermazione, l'Autore sostiene che si può offrire una ricostruzione del passato "reale" per quanto imperfetta. Nel far ciò critica, in modo certo eccessivo, le posizioni dell'archeologia sociale (definisce infatti "sterile 'flirtation'" il rapporto tra archeologia e i metodi scienze sociali, 56) e il legame con le discipline antropologiche. L'affermazione che "it is possible to know the truth" (52) è sostenuta sul piano teorico dal lavoro del filosofo canadese B.J.F. Lonergan, il quale teorizza che la mente umana funziona come una struttura cognitiva dinamica che, attraverso continui processi di verifica (*self-correcting process of learning*) non solo dei dati ma anche degli assunti iniziali.

Nel capitolo 6, "Sounding the Depths: Archaeological and Textual Stratigraphy" l'Autore pone a confronto la stratigrafia archeologica e quella testuale. Come l'archeologia scava per identificare gli strati che si sono accumulati, agendo in senso inverso al tempo di formazione degli stessi, così lo studioso della Bibbia deve scavare per identificare i diversi strati che costituiscono il testo giunto fino a noi e la sua redazione finale. Nell'analisi del testo biblico pertanto bisogna utilizzare sia l'approccio diacronico, che focalizza l'attenzione sulla stratificazione delle tradizioni testuali, sia quello sincronico che si concentra sull'esame del testo nella sua forma finale.

Nel capitolo 7, "Micro-Biblical Archaeology: A Closer "Reading" of Text and Artefact", partendo dall'analisi del passo di Gs 2,15, A. Frendo mostra come testi e archeologia "turn out to be undivided and yet distinct". Vengono esaminati diversi casi nei quali l'archeologia fornisce un aiuto importante nella comprensione di alcuni difficili passi biblici. Il primo caso è quello relativo all'incremento della popolazione delle Alte Terre alla fine del II millennio, documentato archeologicamente dal nascere nel giro di pochi anni di centinaia di villaggi in questa regione. Secondo l'Autore, l'idea dello spostamento di nuclei di individui all'interno della regione levantina può giustificare l'affermazione biblica che le tribù israelitiche si sarebbero insediate in Canaan dopo aver vissuto come nomadi nel deserto meridionale. L'idea di una origine meridionale dei gruppi di ebrei insediatisi nelle Alte Terre verrebbe ulteriormente suffragata dall'archeologia, ad esempio dalla diffusione della ceramica Midianita, che corrisponde bene al movimento di gruppi itineranti di metallurghi da identificarsi coi quei Keniti che come i Midianiti, sono collegati nella Bibbia agli Ebrei.

L'esempio su cui maggiormente A. Frendo si sofferma è il passo di Gs 2,15, relativo alla storia di Raab e di come avrebbe fatto calare con una corda le spie inviate a Gerico da Giosuè attraverso la finestra della sua casa. Un esame della documentazione archeologica relativa ai sistemi fortificati in uso tra Bronzo Tardo e VI sec. a.C. (età di edizione del libro di Giosuè) gli consente di spiegare e datare il passo biblico. Durante il Bronzo Tardo le fortificazioni del Bronzo Medio, vennero riutilizzate e spesso accadeva che alcuni edifici si trovassero ai limiti del tell, costituendo con le loro murature esterne il sistema difensivo della città, come a Tell Beit Mirsim e Tell Batash. Un altro tipo di fortificazione utilizzava

l'ampia stanza posteriore delle "Israelite Houses" come spazio vuoto delle casematte, come è testimoniato a Beersheba. La descrizione della casa di Raab può quindi comprendersi se si pensa tanto alle fortificazioni del Bronzo Tardo quanto a quelle della Età del Ferro (in questo caso utilizzate in modo anacronistico per descrivere una casa del Bronzo Tardo).

Nel capitolo 8 "Macro-Biblical Archaeology: Early Traditions in Later Compositions", vengono presentate le testimonianze dell'esistenza dell'Israele pre-esilico: da quelle epigrafiche (la Stele di Merneptah del 1207 a.C.; l'iscrizione di Dan del IX sec. a.C.; l'iscrizione di Salmanassar III; la stele di Moab dell'840 a.C.) a quelle per testuali (la lista dei popoli trovati dagli Ebrei di ritorno dall'esilio babilonese, ad esempio i Cananei, gli Hittiti, i Periziti e i Gibusiti) al quadro biblico sui Filistei che "matches the overall results of the archaeology of the southern Levant relative to these groups of Sea Peoples" (92). L'individuazione grazie all'utilizzo del metodo storico-critico di nuclei risalenti alla fase formativa di Israele consente all'Autore di ipotizzare che il primo Israele sarebbe stato formato dagli abitanti cananei dei villaggi delle Alte Terre presso i quali si sarebbero stabiliti piccoli gruppi di Ebrei che, liberatisi dalla schiavitù dall'Egitto, avevano "picked up Yahwism in the desert areas to the south-east of Canaan" (83).

In conclusione si può dire che il libro rappresenta un'importante introduzione per quanti si avvicinino all'annosa questione del rapporto testi e archeologia, pur in presenza di un apparato bibliografico forse troppo scarno e a volte un po' datato. La parte archeologica ha certo meno spazio nella trattazione rispetto a quella testuale. L'Autore, infatti, partendo dalla fiducia, in ambito epistemologico, nella possibilità di ricostruire il passato e dal riconoscimento, in ambito storico critico, della conservazione di alcune memorie dell'antico Israele affidate al testo biblico dalla tradizione orale, si affida forse troppo al testo e al suo valore storico, lasciando ancora una volta all'archeologia il ruolo di strumento che "can refute a historian's hypothesis, but it can never prove it" (38). Rimane da chiedersi pertanto se tale ruolo – per quanto necessario proprio come nel paradigma della falsificazione popperiana – renda giustizia alla più volte invocata "indissolubile unity" tra testi e archeologia.

Pur apprezzando nell'opera di A. Frendo i toni concilianti e la volontà di mantenere posizioni ragionevoli nell'utilizzo dei dati testuali ed archeologici, si trova che alcune sue posizioni non siano totalmente bilanciate come vorrebbe far apparire nei principi enunciati. Ne è testimonianza l'uso del termine *history* esclusivamente in riferimento ai testi scritti e non, come sarebbe più appropriato in un testo che si propone di integrare testi e manufatti, per designare una disciplina, la *storia*, che utilizza in sinergia tutti i tipi di fonte (archeologica, testuale ed epigrafica).

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